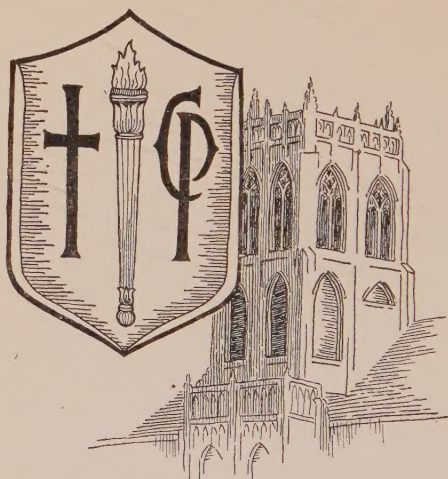


MEDIEVAL
SLAVDOM
AND THE RISE
OF RUSSIA

NOWAK



COLLEGE
OF THE PACIFIC

WITHDRAWN

The Berkshire Studies in European History

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Intended to serve as additional reading to textbooks dealing with European history on the freshman level. However, to compress the whole history of the Slavic world from the dark ages to the 18th century in 113 pages is a well-nigh impossible task. The book is of necessity, bound to be very superficial, but unfortunately it is also cluttered with facts and dates. The information it contains can be obtained from any of the several available one-volume textbooks of Russian history in a form easier to assimilate by the beginner. The booklet is marred by inconsistent and occasionally erroneous rendition of Slavic names and terms. It contains some plain errors, e.g. the confusing statements referring to the truce of Andrusovo.

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MEDIEVAL SLAVDOM AND THE RISE OF RUSSIA

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PREFACE

The college teacher of general European history is always confronted with the task of finding adequate reading for his classes which is neither too specialized and technical nor too elementary. For many topics, including several of the greatest importance, no such material is at the moment available. Moreover, in too many instances, good reading which undeniably does exist is in the form of a chapter in a larger work and is therefore too expensive for adoption as required reading under normal conditions.

The Berkshire Studies in European History have been planned to meet this situation. The topics selected for treatment are those on which there is no easily accessible reading of appropriate length adequate for the needs of a course in general European history. The authors, all experienced teachers, are in nearly every instance actively engaged in the class room and intimately acquainted with its problems. They will avoid a merely elementary presentation of facts, giving instead an interpretive discussion suited to the more mature point of view of college students.

No pretense is made, of course, that these *Studies* are contributions to historical literature in the scholarly sense. Each author, nevertheless, is sufficiently a specialist in the period of which he writes to be familiar with the sources and to have used the latest scholarly contributions to his subject. In order that those who desire to read further on any topic may have some guid-

ance short bibliographies of works in western European languages are given, with particular attention to books of recent date.

Each *Study* is designed as a week's reading. The division into three approximately equal chapters, many of them self-contained and each suitable for one day's assignment, should make the series as a whole easily adaptable to the present needs of college classes. The editors have attempted at every point to maintain and emphasize this fundamental flexibility.

Maps and diagrams will occasionally be furnished with the text when specially needed but a good historical atlas, such as that of Shepherd, is presupposed throughout.

R. A. N.

L. B. P.

S. R. P.

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MEDIEVAL SLAVDOM
AND THE
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MEDIEVAL SLAVDOM AND THE RISE OF RUSSIA

I

MEDIEVAL SLAVDOM

THE Slav states in Europe comprise one-third of the area and one-half the population of that continent. For convenience of study they are usually divided into three groups. Poland and Czecho-Slovakia form the western group. Bulgaria and the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes (Jugo-Slavia) belong to the southern group, while Russia proper, White Russia, and the Ukraine (Little Russia) come under the head of eastern Slavs.

The original home of all the Slavic peoples was situated north of the Carpathian Mountains in the region of the Pripet River, a tributary of the Dnieper. From that center the Slav tribes radiated in all directions until they came in contact with Teutonic, Latin, and Asiatic races and civilizations. In the course of time they acquired new habits, traditions, and ideas that differentiated them from their kinsmen and prepared the way for the development of the various Slav nations of to-day with their distinctly national character and separate Slavic languages.

Our knowledge of the early migrations is very meagre, for the Slavs have left no written record that goes back of the ninth century of the Christian Era although archeological remains indicate a thousand years of history before Christ. Roman writers such as Pliny, Tacitus, and Ptolemy frequently mentioned the Slavs whom they called Venedi or Wends according to the Germanic designation, but their information was scant and indirect, for the Slavs were cut off from all contact with the Roman world by the warlike Asiatic and Teutonic tribes that hovered off the frontiers of the empire. The "Fall of Rome" and the dissolution of Attila's Empire in the fifth century enabled the Slavs to follow the Teutonic invaders by slow stages into the frontiers of the Roman world. Henceforth our knowledge of them increases appreciably, for we have accounts based on direct observation and first hand information of such writers as Priscus, Procopius, Constantine Porphyrogenetos, and others.

SLAV INSTITUTIONS

Procopius, writing in the sixth century A.D., noted that the Slavs lacked a sense of unity and political organization, and he was struck by the great contrast existing between the highly centralized Byzantine administration and the loose tribal organization of the barbarians who recognized no monarch and lived democratically on a basis of equality, settling their differences in popular assemblies or *wiece*. There was an inevitable lack of harmony among the various

tribal chieftains and their assemblies, yet in times of great danger they composed their differences and accepted a single leader who led the clans into battle as a great barbarian horde.

Their equipment on these occasions was shield, lance, and poisoned arrows, and their favorite method of warfare was the ambushade and surprise attack. When confronted with superior forces, they fled to the dense forests and impassable swamps which served them as natural fortresses.

Since they lived by hunting and fishing, and practiced agriculture in a very primitive fashion, the Slavs had to occupy large spaces and change their abodes frequently. Ordinarily upon their arrival in a new area they burned a part of the forest, scattered the ashes, and cultivated the land superficially. Millet was their staple diet yet their manner of cultivating the soil was so superficial that the land became sterile after a single crop, and the clan moved on to other more fertile regions for the next season.

During the first few centuries of the Christian Era the Slavs passed from the hunting and pastoral to the agricultural stage of development. This radical change brought new economic problems which vitally affected the structure of society and its institutions. The primitive horde with its nomad life ceased to exist, and the patriarchal family group gained added importance by becoming the fundamental economic unit of the new agricultural society as it already was the social, political, and religious center of barbarian life. The organization of the family as an economic unit of

production and consumption was known among the southern Slavs as the *zadruga* and represented an early form of communism based on the co-partnership of all members of a family group in the production and consumption of goods. All real property was owned by the family in common, for the individual had no right to possess private property with the exception of such personal necessities as clothes, arms, and ornaments. As the member of a family group, however, he shared in the cultivation of the soil and the produce of the land, lived in a common household under the same roof, practiced a common pagan cult, and was subject to the head of the family in all matters.

When a household became too numerous for adequate housing under the same roof, as a result of marriages and the natural increase of births over deaths, a number of the relatives would sever their family ties and found a new household alongside the old homestead. Each new family group organized itself into a *zadruga* in all respects parallel to the old, and a group of such family communes formed a larger clan and established a village. Each *zadruga* in the village retained its former self-government and continued to cultivate its quadrangle of arable soil. The pasture lands, forests, streams, and village well, however, now became the common property of all the villagers. For the preservation of harmony among the various *zadruga* units, the village assembly of elders elected a mediator called a *starosta*. A group of villages often united to form a larger clan organization called the *zupa* among the

southern Slavs. The leader of this unit received the name of *zupan*. These clans in turn were often federated under the leadership of a *grand zupan* who possessed great prestige but little real power since the assemblies limited his authority and the *zadruga* units jealously guarded their rights of self-government.

By the ninth century most of the Slav clans were organized into these larger tribal units and governed by descendants of various clan leaders of former days such as the *zupan* and *starosta* who became hereditary chieftains and formed the nucleus of a class of nobility. Furthermore with the acceptance of the principle of private property and the dispersion of the clans the consciousness of blood relationship was replaced by a territorial relationship and the later chieftains or princes regarded themselves as rulers of a territory rather than patriarchal princes of a clan.

For purposes of defense the inhabitants of a village constructed fortified enclosures in the midst of a dense forest or inaccessible swamp. Such a stronghold usually consisted of a wooden stockade re-enforced with a mud embankment built generally in a circular form and was called a *grad* or *grad*. It served as an island of safety for the clan in case of an attack. If it was favorably situated the *grad* might be chosen as a residence or primitive castle by a *starosta*, *zupan*, or prince. Many *grady* served as centers for the storage of reserve food supply for a clan, the regular meeting place for the village assembly, and finally the site of a garrison and market place. In more modern times the *grad*

became the nucleus of a town and the term *grad* became a synonym for town or city as in Novgorod or Leningrad.

THE WESTERN SLAVS

The tribes that migrated westward and northwestward to the Vistula, Elbe, and Rhine Rivers did not attract the attention of Roman writers, hence our knowledge of them is based primarily on Germanic sources, the legends of the Slavs themselves, archeological discoveries, and comparative philology.

The westward migration from the region of the Pripet River began before the Christian Era and ended about 1000 A.D. By the third century the Slavs had reached the Elbe and Oder Rivers. In the succeeding centuries they settled a large district of northwestern Europe bounded on the west by the Elbe River, on the south by the Danube, on the east by the Vistula, and on the north by the Baltic Sea. This region was originally inhabited by the Celts who were displaced by the Germanic invaders from Scandinavia and Denmark before the Christian Era. In the second century A.D. the German tribes evacuated the territory and made way for the Slav settlement.

But in the eighth century the expansion of the Carolingian Empire started a movement for the reconquest of the lands occupied by the Slavs. Charlemagne's biographer, Einhard, wrote *Sala fluvius Thuringos et Sorabos (Slavs) dividit*. In 782 the Germans started a great offensive to drive back the Slav tribes which had crossed the Elbe River. In this way the Slavic ex-

pansion westward clashed with the beginnings of the German *Drang nach Osten* or "pressure toward the east," and the great struggle between Slav and German for the possession of northwestern Europe, which still continues in the present century, was inaugurated. In 805 Charlemagne designated a boundary (*limes Sora-bicus*) between the races. It followed roughly the course of the Elbe, Saale, and Danube Rivers. Later emperors pushed this boundary line farther eastward by establishing counts of the marches (margraves) along the frontier. These semi-independent feudal lords carried on a war of extermination against the Slavs and carved out new principalities or marches for themselves as they advanced eastward.

Being an agricultural people, poorly organized, and lacking the *Furor Teutonicus* of their neighbors, the Slavs steadily gave way to the German pressure until contact with their enemies and bitter necessity taught some of the more vigorous tribes to adopt the organization and military methods of their opponents. One of these tribes, known as the Polanie or "dwellers of the plain" between the Oder and Vistula Rivers, assumed leadership in forming a confederation that resulted in the creation of the Polish nation. Another group of western Slav tribes known as the Czechs halted German expansion toward the southeast by establishing a state on the ruins of the earlier Slav country of Moravia which had been destroyed in the ninth century by German and Asiatic invaders.

A second decisive factor which welded together these scattered tribes into larger political units and in-

troduced medieval civilization among them was the Christian religion. In the ninth century there was every prospect that all the Slavs of Europe would be converted to Byzantine Christianity through the missionary activity of Cyril and Method of Saloniki. A united Slavdom bound together by powerful ties of race, language, and Byzantine Christianity might have altered the whole course of history in the conflict between German and Slav, but in the ninth century the Magyars, Asiatic ancestors of the Hungarian nation, drove a great wedge into the center of Slavdom separating them into eastern, southern, and western groups and cutting off the latter from all contact with the Byzantine world. Henceforth the Poles and Czechs of the west were isolated from their kinsmen and entered a new orbit of civilization centering at Rome.

THE RISE OF BOHEMIA

Boiohaemum, the "home of the ancient Celtic tribe of the Boii," is situated in the center of continental Europe in the upper regions of the Elbe River basin and is separated from the neighboring states of Bavaria, Saxony, and Prussia by a series of mountain ranges. The Boii made this territory their home about 1000 B.C. Five hundred years later the first wave of Slav immigrants arrived in Bohemia from the north and mingled with the Celts who continued to rule Bohemia until the arrival of more warlike Germanic invaders, the Marcomanni, in the first century of our era. The latter were in turn crushed by the Asiatic horde

of Attila in the fifth century, and their lands were appropriated by a second wave of Slav immigrants from the regions of the upper Oder and Vistula Rivers. The ablest of these Slav tribes were the Czechs, who were destined to found the later Bohemian nation. In the sixth century the Bohemians were conquered by the Avars and paid tribute to the conqueror until the middle of the following century when they were emancipated by the military genius of a Frank chieftain named Samo. In gratitude the Slavs made him their king, and Samo (623-658) enjoys the distinction of being the founder of the first Slavonic state in history. During his lifetime the Slavs of Bohemia repelled the attacks of Avars in the east and Germans in the west, but upon his death the state dissolved into a great many tribes which could offer little resistance to the enemy. From the death of Samo to the crowning of Charlemagne as Emperor in the West (800) the history of Bohemia is veiled in the deepest obscurity, for the account of Cosmas of Prague, written four centuries later, is our only source, and it is at best a confusion of traditions and fantastic legends relating the fortunes of a certain Prince Krok and his daughter Libussa whose marriage with a peasant named Premysl led to the foundation of the first Bohemian dynasty of the Premyslidi that ruled the nation until 1306.

In the middle of the ninth century Bohemia was overshadowed by the rise of the neighboring Slav state of Moravia in the valley of the Morava River. The able Prince Mojmir united the Slav tribes in that region, established a powerful state, and extended his

rule over northern Hungary, Slovakia, and for a time over Bohemia.

The existence of these two Slav states off the eastern frontier of the Carolingian Empire checked the eastward expansion of the Germans, and various emperors sent expeditions against their pagan enemies under the pretext of a crusade. In 805 Charlemagne attacked Bohemia; his successor, Louis the Pious, sent expeditions against Moravia in 846, 864, and 868; Arnulf invaded Moravia in 890; and Henry the Fowler entered Bohemia with an army in 928. The Slavs usually repulsed the enemy but Venceslas of Bohemia (928-36) finally submitted to the German pressure and purchased peace at the price of an annual tribute. In his reign Bohemia became reconciled to German influence, and the establishment of peaceful relations with the West prepared the way for the introduction of Christianity. German missionaries carried the gospel to the Bohemians, and in 836 the Archbishop of Salzburg consecrated a church in far-off Moravia. In 845 fourteen Bohemian nobles accepted Christian baptism in the town of Regensburg.

In the expedition of 846 against Moravia, Louis the German deposed Mojmir and placed the latter's nephew, Rostislav (846-70), on the throne as a vassal of the Empire. But the new prince refused to submit to German ecclesiastical and political control. In 862 he sent envoys to the Byzantine emperor asking for missionaries who could speak the Slavonic languages. Apparently it was his intention to strengthen the state by converting all the heathen to a common Christian

faith under the direction of a native hierarchy that could counteract the ecclesiastical influence of the German clergy. The missionaries, Cyril and Method, who responded to this call in 862, were peculiarly well fitted for the task imposed on them. At Saloniki they had come into frequent contact with Macedonian Slavs whose language they studied, and it was there that they most probably elaborated an alphabet based on Greek letters for the use of their Slav neighbors. Armed with translations of the Scriptures in the Slav language, Cyril and Method succeeded in converting the Moravian people to the Christian faith during their own lifetime, thereby emphasizing the dismal failure of the German missionaries. The latter appealed to Rome and denounced the "Apostles to the Slavs" as heretics but without success. In 864 and 868, therefore, the German hierarchy supported the Emperor in his expeditions against Rostislav but the latter managed to repulse the invaders.

Two years later the Emperor repeated the strategy of 846 by supporting Svatopolk in a conspiracy against his uncle. Rostislav was deposed, and two German margraves were appointed to rule over Moravia. Deceived by his ally, Svatopolk led a national uprising against the foreign invaders, and in 874 secured from the Emperor a recognition of his independence. Although he gained the throne by treachery, Svatopolk proved to be one of the ablest princes of the Mojmir dynasty. By extending his rule over Silesia, the district of Cracow, parts of northeastern Germany, and Bohemia, he created a Great Moravian Empire and at

the same time checked the advance of his German neighbors. But his death in 894 ended the greatness of Moravia, which fell a prey to internal strife. Bohemia revolted under the leadership of Spytnehev who restored the dynasty of Premysl with the assistance of German troops, and a decade later (907) all Moravia was conquered by a new Asiatic invader, the Magyar of Hungary, who was destined to alter the whole course of Slavonic history. The Magyars defeated the Slavs and Germans and ravaged their lands for decades. The great Bohemian historian, Palacky, stated without reserve that "The invasion of the Magyars and their establishment in Hungary . . . is the greatest misfortune that has befallen the Slav world during a thousand years," for the wedge which they drove into the Slav world scattered the tribes in all directions and prevented the development of a great united Slav power extending from the Baltic Sea to the Peloponnesus.

Bohemia quickly recovered from the disasters of the first quarter of the tenth century, and under the leadership of two remarkable statesmen, Boleslas I (935-67) and Boleslas II (967-99), succeeded to the position of Moravia as the greatest Slav power in western Europe. The first of these sovereigns continued the traditional conflict with the Germans but in 950 consented to pay tribute and five years later formed an alliance with his former enemies against the more dangerous Hungarians who were decisively crushed at the battle of Augsburg (955). Having rid himself of the Hungarian menace, Boleslas I resorted to di-

plomacy in counteracting the German influence. He strengthened his position abroad by the marriage of his daughter, Dubravka, to Mieszko of Poland, and at home he increased royal power at the expense of the petty chieftains and nobles who were often prone to call on German aid in their struggle for autonomy. The second Boleslas carried the policies of his predecessor on to a brilliant climax, for he became master in his own household, checked the growing influence of German ecclesiastics by founding a separate bishopric of Prague in 973, and extended his rule over Moravia, Silesia, northern Hungary, and certain districts of southern Poland. There was every reason to think that Bohemia under these two rulers was about to lay the foundation of a great Slav empire that would dominate all central Europe, but, as in the case of Moravia, the death of Boleslas II was the signal for a violent reaction against his centralizing policy on the part of the restless nobility, and a dispute over the succession led to civil war in the reign of Boleslas III. The center of political gravity in the western Slav world now shifted to Poland which dominated the Slav states of the west until 1025. Under Bretislav I (1037-55) Bohemia again resumed leadership, for that prince restored the nation and gained control over all Poland as well as Moravia and Silesia. His triumph was short-lived, however, for he had to face two German armies and was compelled to yield to the demands of the emperor, who insisted on the separation of Poland and Bohemia (1041). Although their attempts to found a powerful and independent Slav state had been

thwarted many times by the Germans, the members of the Premysl Dynasty never lost sight of their ideal. The sovereign who approximated this ideal most closely was Premysl Ottokar II (1253-78) but even his reign ended in disaster on account of the hostility of Rudolph of Hapsburg and the electors of the empire.

Upon the extinction of the Premysl dynasty in 1306, the House of Luxemburg produced a great Bohemian king in the person of Charles IV (1346-78) who was also Holy Roman Emperor. A truly national sovereign, Charles sought to reconstruct the empire around Bohemia as a center. Prague became a new center of learning with its university founded in 1348, and was embellished with many new buildings and palaces. The Bishop of Prague was raised to the rank of archbishop and designated as Papal Legate for all northern countries. Thus Charles IV proclaimed a new era of political and ecclesiastical independence for Bohemia, and at the same time he fostered the development of commerce and trade and reformed the judicial and administrative organization of the country. The Czech language replaced German as the language of the court, and the support which the king gave to the revival of national literature paved the way for the great national, political, social, and religious revolt that took place in the fifteenth century under the leadership of John Hus and Zizka.

The election of Ferdinand of Hapsburg as king of Bohemia in 1526 again brought the country into the Hapsburg Empire, and with the exception of one brief

period during the Thirty Years' War, it remained under German control until the end of the World War.

THE GERMAN INFLUENCE ON BOHEMIA

The close contact that has existed between the Germanic peoples and the Slavs of Bohemia ever since the days of Charlemagne is exemplified at first by the long-drawn-out struggle for national existence, later by the recognition of Bohemia as a member of the Holy Roman Empire followed by frequent election of her princes and kings as Holy Roman Emperors, and later still by the incorporation of the state into the Hapsburg Empire in the sixteenth century. One thousand years of association with the Romano-German civilization of the West inevitably brought about important changes in the social, political, religious, and economic life of the Czech people. In the earliest period of this contact, we noted how the fear of German conquest proved to be an important factor in welding together the loosely organized Slav tribes into a single nation and in strengthening the position and power of the leading prince. Despite their valiant and partially successful resistance to the German pressure, the Bohemian people were exposed to the peaceful penetration of a higher civilization that attracted the barbarians themselves. From time immemorial German merchants and colonists settled in Bohemia, organized towns, and introduced German laws, customs, and speech. Ottokar II even posed as a German ruler, fos-

tered colonization by granting special protection to German immigrants, and attempted to formulate a code of laws based on the law of Magdeburg and other cities of Bavaria and Saxony. The middle class of Bohemia threatened to become entirely Germanized by the fourteenth century. The introduction of Christianity by German missionaries and clergy had also a political character and was an important means of extending German control. This struggle between German and Slav ecclesiastics for control of the church in Bohemia was another phase of the racial and national conflict. In the twelfth century medieval chivalry threatened to displace the old Slav political institutions, and in less than two centuries later Bohemia was almost completely feudalized. The nobility aped the court life of the West, married German princesses, formed alliances with German rulers against their own monarch, and increased their political privileges and rights by quoting feudal law. German speech became the language of the Bohemian court, the nobility, and the middle classes of the towns, and threatened to drive out the Czech language altogether.

The great Hussite revolt of the fifteenth century was not so much a religious movement as it was a national reaction against the prevailing German influence and a conflict between two ideals of government—the German feudal system and the more democratic Slav tradition. Likewise the second great revolt of Bohemia during the Thirty Years' War was primarily a national and political conflict. The Battle of White Hill (1620) ended Bohemian independence until the outbreak of

the World War when the Czech nation again asserted itself. There has survived in Czecho-Slovakia a considerable German element, and it is not difficult, in the light of the foregoing historical sketch, to understand why this is one of the important "minorities" problems produced by the War.

THE RISE OF POLAND

The cradle of the Polish nation was the region drained by the lower Vistula and Warta Rivers, where the Polanie made a determined stand against the Germans and set up a kingdom under the first historic dynasty of the Piast family (960-1370). In the year 966 the shrewd statesman, Mieszko I, deprived the Germans of their religious pretext for invading his domains by accepting Christianity. At the same time he married a Christian princess of Bohemia and concluded an alliance with the Czechs against the common enemy. By the year 1000 Poland became a powerful, independent, military state under the rule of Boleslas the Brave (992-1025), a military genius, who waged numerous successful wars with Germans, Czechs, and Russians, and extended the frontiers of his country to include modern Eastern Galicia in the east, Silesia in the west, and the Slovak country beyond the Carpathians in the south. His army of twenty thousand trained regulars marched and counter-marched over the territory extending from the Elbe River in the west to the city of Kiev on the Dnieper River in the east. He freed Poland from German

ecclesiastical control and political domination by setting up an independent archbishopric at Gniezno in the year 1000 and by having himself crowned king in 1025.

But the military state organized by Boleslas was not lasting. On his death the kingdom fell apart and underwent various phases of disintegration and reintegration until the reign of Casimir the Great (1333-70). A long period of peace, retrenchment, and reform, however, in the reign of Casimir restored the state and gave it a much-needed rest from internal strife and the earlier invasions of Germans and Tartars. The laws were codified, the administration was unified, economic progress of the towns was fostered, and the peasants were protected from exploitation by their masters. Toleration was granted to all men as long as they contributed to the prosperity and welfare of the nation. Germans, Jews, and Armenians received special protection and became an important commercial element in the towns. In foreign affairs, however, Casimir's policy of peace led to important sacrifices of territory to the Germans and Czechs, for the Teutonic Knights received two provinces in the far north while the Czech king acquired Silesia upon renouncing his claims to the Polish throne. This border province between Poland, Bohemia, and the Germans of the West eventually became a part of the Hapsburg Empire and to-day constitutes the much-disputed "Silesian Problem." These losses, however, were in part recouped by the acquisition of Red Russia (present Eastern Galicia). It is important to note also that the German

pressure in the west brought about a change in the Polish colonizing movement which turned eastward in the direction of the Dniester River in search of an outlet to the Black Sea.

Casimir the Great, who was the last of the Piast dynasty, secured the succession for his nephew, King Louis of Hungary (1371-82), but the latter seldom visited Poland and exploited it in the interest of his own family. Upon his death the nobility recognized his younger daughter, Hedwig, as queen and induced her to cast aside her affianced lover, William of Austria, for the uncultured and heathen Duke of Lithuania. For weighty reasons of state the seventeen-year-old queen disregarded her personal feelings, accepted Ladislas Jagellon, and celebrated a marriage in 1386 that profoundly altered the whole history of central and eastern Europe, for the union of Poland and Lithuania halted the eastward progress of the Germans and checked the westward expansion of Muscovy.

GERMAN INFLUENCE IN POLAND

German influence in Poland was not as pronounced as it was in Bohemia, for the Slavs of the Baltic region between the Elbe and Oder Rivers separated the Poles from the Empire and bore the brunt of German attack. Furthermore the great expanse of the sparsely settled Polish territories prevented the rapid spread of western ideas and intensified local Slav traditions. Finally the Poles were more successful in defending their frontiers against the enemy. The resultant de-

crease of German influence in Poland augmented the importance of Roman law and gave to the Roman Catholic Church a more national character. The church fostered canon law and actively cooperated with the princes in consolidating the Slav tribes into larger organizations. The clergy later took its place alongside the nobility as an important element in Polish political life, for it was not a foreign body like the German ecclesiastics of Bohemia. Beginning with the twelfth century, however, German colonists settled in the villages and towns of Poland. They brought with them their own manners, customs, laws, and speech, and as in the case of Bohemia, the middle class of Poland was Germanized. The German character of these cities in a large measure explains the exclusion of the burghers from political influence in the state with a resultant increase in the power of the nobility and clergy as the truly national classes of society.

THE MENACE OF THE GERMAN MILITARY ORDERS

The union of Poland and Lithuania was a direct result of the German *Drang nach Osten*, for in addition to their aggressive tactics in the west, the Germans appeared off the northern frontier of Poland and Lithuania as crusaders against the heathen Prussians, Lithuanians, and Letts, who belonged to a separate branch of the Indo-European family of races (the Baltic Race) and inhabited the long stretch of Baltic littoral extending from Pomerania to modern Latvia. Early in the thirteenth century missionaries from Lü-

beck founded a bishopric at Riga (1202) and received the support of the German Knights of the Sword in extending their control over Livonia (Latvia and Estonia). Their next objective was Lithuania, but the chieftains of the Niemen River basin united their forces and defeated the enemy in the year 1236. The victory was indecisive, however, for the Knights of the Sword united with a more powerful German order that was operating against the Prussians in East Prussia. This Order of the Knights of the Cross (Teutonic Knights) was founded in the Holy Land in 1190 but failed to secure a foothold in the east on account of the opposition of the Knights Templars. In 1211 it moved to Transylvania upon the invitation of the King of Hungary only to be expelled ten years later as a worldly acquisitive body of men endangering the integrity of Hungary. As they wandered about Germany in search of a new home, the Teutonic Knights received an invitation from Conrad of Mazovia (1228) to settle on his territory near the Vistula River and render him assistance in a war against the Prussians. They accepted the offer with alacrity, but, mindful of their unhappy experience in Transylvania, had it confirmed by Emperor Frederick II with rights to conquer and rule the heathen Prussians. By the year 1237 they secured control of both banks of the Vistula River and advanced into East Prussia to unite with the Livonian Knights of the Sword. This union of the two orders was a challenge to Poland and Lithuania, for it cut them off from access to the Baltic Sea and endangered their existence as independent states.

The first Lithuanian prince to realize fully the danger of German conquest was Mendvog (1240-63) who hastily united the Lithuanian tribes and began a war with the Teutonic Order that lasted over a hundred years. He even received Christian baptism to deprive his enemies of their religious pretext for invading the country but to no avail; his pagan subjects denounced his apostasy while the German knights managed to have him murdered. Still the extremely able dynasty of Lithuanian rulers produced even greater leaders. Gedymin (1315-41) reorganized the state completely and created a well-disciplined army that not only checked the Teutonic Knights in the north but conquered important towns and territories in the south including the strategic cities of Kiev, Smolensk, and Pinsk and the province of Podolia. These acquisitions brought Lithuania into close contact with Muscovy and the influence of the Greek Orthodox Church. The greatest of all Lithuanian princes was Olgiert (1341-77) who made war on Poland for possession of Volhynia, conquered a large part of the Ukraine around Kiev, and on three different occasions defeated the rival state of Muscovy. In his reign Lithuania reached the height of her power as a great Slav empire, for the original Lithuanians, who numbered only one tenth of the total population, intermarried with the Slavs and adopted their civilization.

When Ladislas Jagellon, the eldest of Olgiert's twelve sons, succeeded to the throne, the empire was weakened by civil war, numerous family intrigues, and the intervention of Muscovy and the Teutonic Knights.

For a short time Ladislas was imprisoned by his enemies but regained the throne when he agreed to cede the province of Zmudz to the Teutonic Order, which seized this opportunity to gain control over all Lithuania. The restored sovereign, however, refused to recognize the grand master of the Teutonic Knights as his overlord, and the latter declared war in 1383. In the midst of this crisis, Queen Hedwig ascended the Polish throne, and her astute ministers proposed marriage with an offer of the Polish crown to Ladislas. The latter signed the agreement and was crowned king of Poland (1386).

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS UNION

Upon the accession of Ladislas to the Polish throne, Lithuania accepted western Christianity and turned its back on Russian influence and civilization. In the second place, the union established in 1386 was strengthened by close cooperation between the two states in the following centuries and expressed itself in no less than eight acts of union, the last and most important of which established an organic union (Lublin 1569) that lasted until the partitions of Poland-Lithuania in the eighteenth century. Besides it resulted in the foundation of the Jagellonian dynasty which became a dangerous rival of the House of Hapsburg in forming a great federal empire that at one time included not only Poland and Lithuania but Bohemia, Hungary, and Roumania. Long before the House of Hapsburg could oppose the power of Islam a Jagellon

King of Poland and Hungary fought the Turks at Varna (1444). Finally, the chief objective of the union, cooperation against the German knights, was attained when the united armies of Poland and Lithuania decisively defeated the Teutonic Knights at Grunwald and Tannenberg (1410). In a second victory at Thorn (Torun 1466) the knights were completely crushed, although the Polish king in a moment of excessive generosity allowed them to remain in East Prussia as vassals of Poland.

In the sixteenth century Poland attained the highest development of her civilization, particularly in the reign of the peace-loving and enlightened Sigismund I (1506-48) and in that of his equally brilliant son, Sigismund II (1548-72). The first Sigismund married Lady Bona Sforza of Milan who entered Poland with a large retinue of Italian followers, bringing with them the Renaissance culture of Italy. This intellectual stimulus from abroad hastened the development of the "golden age of Polish literature, art, and science" throughout the rest of the century. In their anxiety to preserve peace with foreign nations, the two Sigismunds renounced the old policy of Jagellonian imperialism by resigning their claims (1515) to the Hungarian and Czech crowns which the House of Hapsburg hoped to acquire. They also permitted the secularization of East Prussia (1525) under the rule of Albert of Brandenburg and paved the way for its annexation by the Hohenzollern monarchy in 1618. War with Russia, however, could not be avoided even at the sacrifice of Smolensk, while the expansion of the Ottoman

Empire resulted in the loss of an outlet to the Black Sea. These sacrifices were in part compensated by a long period of peace, the act of organic union between Poland and Lithuania (1569), and the strengthening of Poland's position on the Baltic Sea and in Livonia.

The death of Sigismund II (1572) brought the Jagellonian dynasty to an end. Four years later the nobility elected as king Stephen Báthory (1576-86), the ruling prince of Transylvania who was also pretender to the throne of Hungary and the bitterest enemy of the House of Hapsburg. This king proved to be one of the ablest sovereigns and the wisest who ever sat upon the Polish throne, a veritable genius as a statesman, diplomat, and soldier. At home he strengthened royal power, subdued rebellious barons, and suppressed an insurrection at Danzig that was instigated by the Hanseatic League, the emperor, and Denmark. In foreign diplomacy his policy was based on a carefully preserved friendship with Turkey for the purpose of thwarting the designs of the House of Hapsburg on Poland, Hungary, and Transylvania. At the same time he retained the confidence of Christian sovereigns who regarded him as the "rising hope of Christendom" in the proposed league against the Turk. While the emperor was held in check by this skilful diplomacy, Báthory fought three masterful campaigns against Ivan the Terrible of Russia. The latter was saved from complete defeat only by the intervention of the Holy See which sought to bring about the union of the eastern and western churches through the agency of

the tsar. The war ended in the agreement of Iam Zapolski (1582). In the last years of his reign, Báthory planned to bring about a union with Russia, by conquest if necessary, as a preliminary measure in his great project to expel the Turk from Europe and definitely to deprive the Hapsburgs of their pretext for intervention in Hungary and Transylvania, but he was overtaken by death before his plans were put into operation.

In the seventeenth century Sigismund III (1587-1632) and his son Ladislas IV (1632-47) continued the offensive against Russia with notable success although Poland had already entered upon a period of decline. In the reign of John Casimir (1648-68) the "deluge" of foreign invasions by Cossacks, Turks, Tartars, Swedes, and Russians all but annihilated the nation. The recovery of some of her old prestige under King John Sobieski (1674-96) in his victories over the Turk, culminating in the famous siege of Vienna (1683), failed to revive the nation whose past glories were eclipsed by the rising power of Russia and Prussia in the eighteenth century.

THE SOUTHERN SLAVS

The ancestors of the southern Slavs migrated from the Pripet River basin southward toward the Danube and Save Rivers during the first two centuries of the Christian Era and in the third settled in the northern part of present-day Hungary. Three hundred years later they occupied all the territory stretching from the

mouth of the Save River to the Black Sea and extending northward to the upper reaches of the Saale River and the foothills of the Alps Mountains. In the district between the Danube River and the Carpathian Mountains, they mingled, without losing their identity, with Gepides, Goths, Sarmatians, and Huns who successively occupied that broad stretch of territory. Unlike those nomads, who never remained in a region long enough to strike root, these Slavs were tillers of the soil who slowly filtered into new territory without losing contact with their kinsmen in the homeland. It was a process of expansion comparable to the westward movement of the frontier in America. Nomads on the march often plundered the Slav settlements or levied tribute but on account of their economic value rarely destroyed them. If a conqueror desired to remain among the Slavs he was readily assimilated.

In 527 the Emperor Justinian noted Slav settlements along the entire northern frontier of the Byzantine Empire and also along the lower Danube where they mingled with Huns and Bulgars from Asia. The Asiatic Avars drove many Slav tribes across the Danube River into the Balkan peninsula. Those who remained were subdued and recruited by the Avars as foot soldiers for their expeditions against Constantinople. In the second half of the sixth century these combined Avar-Slav expeditions penetrated into Illyria and Dalmatia. Soon the Slavs learned to raid the Empire on their own account. As early as the year 549 they pillaged Thrace and ten years later besieged Constantinople itself but were defeated by Justinian's able

general, Belisarius. In the course of the seventh century they turned aside to Greece and advanced into the Peloponnesus where many tribes settled down to agriculture. Unlike the Asiatic nomads these Slavs were afflicted with land hunger and entered the Balkan peninsula with the intention of remaining, for it was their chief objective to occupy new lands and to cultivate this new territory to which they clung with a passionate intensity. The Byzantine emperors soon learned that it was easier to conciliate the newcomers and to incorporate them into the Empire than to dislodge them.

In time the scattered and dissociated Slav tribes of the Balkan peninsula formed larger tribal units and consolidated into four distinct groups which laid the foundations of the later Bulgarian, Serbian, Croatian and Montenegrin states. The history of the Balkan peninsula from the seventh to the fourteenth century is a story of bitter conflict between Bulgaria, Serbia, and the Byzantine Empire for possession of the whole peninsula, and this three-cornered contest did not cease until all participants were overwhelmed in the fourteenth century by the Ottoman Turks.

THE RISE OF BULGARIA

In the last quarter of the seventh century the Slav communities that had settled in the territory between the Danube River and the Balkan Mountains were conquered by a Finno-Turkish tribe of Bulgars who had crossed the Danube in the year 679. Their ablest

chieftain and warrior was Krum (802-815) who organized the subject Slav tribes into a powerful Bulgarian state which successfully resisted the power of Byzantium. In 811 Krum even defeated a large imperial army and captured the Emperor Nicephorus. Two years later he advanced against Constantinople but was unable to take that impregnable fortress. His successors, fascinated by the riches and splendor of the New Rome, also attempted to capture the city without success.

In the course of the ninth century this uncivilized race of nomads adopted the manners, customs, and language of their conquered Slav subjects. Boris (852-888) even deserted the faith of his fathers and adopted Christianity upon the express command of the Byzantine emperor who suggested a treaty of friendship on this basis in 863. Evidently the Bulgars were losing their nomadic character, for Boris preferred peace, commerce, and trade with Constantinople rather than war, and he sent his younger son Simeon to the imperial court to receive a Greek education.

When Simeon ascended the Bulgarian throne "he was half a Greek," and like his famous prototype, Justinian, was more Greek than the Greeks themselves in his admiration of Byzantine culture and his determination to rule the eastern world as a supreme autocrat. His reign (893-927) was extraordinarily significant in the history of Bulgaria and of transcendent importance in the whole field of medieval Slavdom, for it opened wide the gates through which Byzantine civilization and Greek Orthodoxy entered the Slav world. Simeon

was determined to civilize his people and to create an empire large enough to absorb the entire Byzantine world. His court at Preslav became the center of the new learning. Greek scholars were invited to expound the ancient texts, and copyists were kept busy on translations of this Byzantine heritage into the old Bulgarian or Glagolitic script invented by Cyril and Method for the use of the Slavs. Disciples of Cyril and Method found refuge in Bulgaria upon the dissolution of the Moravian Empire and assisted in the task of translating Greek chronicles, lives of the saints, theological treatises, and laws (*Ecloga* and *Procheiron*) which became the basis of a Bulgarian literature and culture that was destined to influence profoundly the civilization of such Orthodox states as Russia, Serbia, and Roumania.

In foreign affairs Simeon was likewise brilliantly successful. He defied the Byzantine emperors, set up an independent patriarchate for Bulgaria, defeated the Hungarians, conquered Macedonia, Thrace, and Serbia, and in token of his independent position assumed the title of tsar. He was master of nearly the entire Balkan peninsula. When he died in 927 the empire which he created rapidly declined and fell as a result of the victories of the Byzantine emperors Nicephorus Phocas and John Zimiskes. The latter emperor formed an alliance with the Russians, who fell upon the northeastern part of Bulgaria and conquered it in 971. A new Bulgarian state was organized in the southwestern half of the empire and reached its greatest success under Tsar Samuel, whose brilliant career

was ended by the crushing defeat of his armies in 1014 by Basil II of Constantinople. Henceforth for two hundred years all Bulgaria remained a province of the Byzantine Empire until 1186.

THE RISE OF SERBIA

The ancestors of the Serbian and Croatian peoples crossed the Danube River in the sixth century. In the year 620 the Emperor Heraclius invited them to settle permanently south of the Danube as allies of the Empire and as the first line of defense against the warlike Avars. But they lacked organization and military prowess to check their warlike neighbors. Those who escaped Avar conquest migrated farther into the Empire to the province of Illyria where they again settled down to cultivation of the soil. The old *zadruga* remained the basic unit of organization, and these autonomous family communes were associated into tribes or *zupa* units. Their earliest *grand zupan* appears to have been a certain Vioslav (830) but he had little authority and was unable to defend the loosely federated tribes against the Hungarian and Bulgar states. Accordingly the western Serb lands (Croatia) soon fell under the sway of Hungary and the inhabitants adopted western civilization and Roman Catholicism. While the Croatians became westernized, their brethren, who lived in close proximity to the Bulgars and Greeks, adopted Byzantine civilization and Greek Orthodoxy. To the year 1018 these Serb tribes accepted the overlordship of Bulgaria, and upon the de-

struction of that state by Basil II they paid tribute to Constantinople. In the twelfth century, however, an ambitious and able *grand zupan*, Stephen Nemanja (1165-96), subdued the rival chieftains, consolidated the tribes, and founded the first Serbian state which threatened to become the dominant power in the Balkan peninsula when Constantinople was sacked by the Venetian crusaders in 1204.

Serbia's only serious rival for the hegemony of the Balkan peninsula was the revived Second Bulgarian Empire ruled by the Asen dynasty (1186-1330), but even that formidable rival was decisively defeated in the famous battle of Küstendil, June 28, 1330, and annexed to Serbia for the next fifty years. The reign of Stephen Dushan (1331-55), one of Serbia's greatest national heroes, marks the apogee of Serbian power and glory, for that sovereign doubled the area of his empire by annexing Macedonia, Albania, Epirus, and Thessaly. He assumed the imperial title of tsar, created an independent Serbian patriarchate, issued a code of laws (1349) in imitation of the Byzantine emperors, and even contemplated the capture of Constantinople itself when he died in 1355. His death, however, proved to be the signal for internal dissension and the Serbian Empire dissolved into its component parts during the reign of his successor. Thus the Byzantine Empire, Bulgaria, and Serbia enjoyed their various periods of triumph in the Balkan peninsula until the fourteenth century when all three were overwhelmed by the rise of a new great power, the Ottoman Turk state in Asia Minor. Having isolated Constantinople

from the rest of the peninsula, the Turks marched northward against the Slavs whose combined armies were decisively crushed in the memorable battle of Kossovo in 1389. All the southern Slavs, with the exception of the small Montenegrin state, were now incorporated within the newly created empire of the Ottoman Turk and remained a conquered race until the era of liberation in the nineteenth century.

BYZANTINE INFLUENCE ON THE SLAVS

The Byzantine Empire transmitted the civilization of the West in a modified form to the Slavs of the south and east of Europe, and Constantinople performed for the East what Rome had accomplished for the West. For a thousand years the Slavs who came in contact with the Byzantine world looked to Constantinople for guidance in the political, religious, economic, and social development of their respective states. Slav chieftains in organizing their own states borrowed their theories of strong monarchy and autocracy from Constantinople and established regular armies on the basis of Byzantine practice. In setting up their courts the Slav rulers imitated the elaborate ceremonies and etiquette of the imperial court. Byzantine missionaries introduced Greek Orthodoxy, while Cyril and Method improved on their effort by opening up for the Slav world the entire range of Greek literature which became the basis of the Slav learning and religion. Byzantine art and architecture also entered the Slav states as the handmaids of religion in the form of iconogra-

phy¹ and churches of the cupola or dome type. The prosperity of the Slav states was often entirely dependent on the commerce and trade of Constantinople, the great international marketplace of the eastern world. Russia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Roumania are all deeply indebted to Constantinople for their law codes, for the *Ruskaia Pravda*, the laws of Simeon, and the code of Stephen Dushan are for the most part based on the *Procheiron*, the *Ecloga*, or the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of Justinian. Finally every powerful sovereign of Bulgaria, Russia, and Serbia aspired to universal empire and the imperial title as the ultimate ideal. Just as Rome passed on the imperial idea to the German barbarians of the Carolingian Empire, to the Holy Roman Emperors, to Napoleon, Kaiser William II, and Mussolini in our own day; so Constantinople passed its imperial traditions on to Tsar Simeon, Tsar Samuel, Stephen Dushan, and the Russian Tsars.

THE EASTERN SLAVS

The Eastern Slavs, who were destined to found the most powerful of all the Slav states, migrated from the Pripet homeland into present-day Russia, the topography of which facilitated their progress eastward. By

¹ Icons were portable painted images or pictures of Jesus, Holy Mary, and the saints of the Greek Orthodox Church, usually placed in the most prominent corner of the Russian home as objects of worship. Originally imported from Constantinople, they were the work of Greek painters until Russia developed her own masters. Their veneration and actual worship by Russians was a reminder of the failure of the iconoclastic movement in the ninth century at Constantinople.

the sixth century they reached the Don River, for no impassable mountain ranges divided the vast forest-covered lowlands drained by the intricate network of streams that flowed into the Don, the Volga, and the Dnieper Rivers, the three great systems which served as navigable highways, linking together the surrounding Baltic, Black, and Caspian Seas.

Long before the Slavs appeared on the scene the Dnieper River had been used by ancient peoples as a great highway connecting the Baltic and Black Seas. Earlier civilizations existed along her banks during a period of one thousand years before the Christian Era, and their flourishing cities survived the rise and fall of nations. The hospitable Dnieper welcomed Greeks, Scythians, Tartars, and Slavs without distinction. The Slavs entered upon this ancient heritage of organized cities without encountering any opposition, for the Iranian Thraco-Scythian civilization of southern Russia had been destroyed in the third and fourth centuries, A.D., by the Sarmatians who organized no new states that could offer any resistance. Even the Germanic Goths of Hermanaric, who entered the Dnieper basin in the third century, did not remain there but moved onward to the Danube River and the Black Sea where they divided to form the Visigoth and Ostrogoth nations.

The Slavs encountered opposition, however, when they passed beyond the Dnieper River into the steppes or prairie lands of southern Russia, for these great plains were often inundated by successive waves of invaders from Asia. In 375 the Huns crossed the

steppes on their way to the west, drove the Visigoths across the Danube River into the frontiers of the Roman world, and founded an empire under the leadership of Attila. This Empire of Attila cut the Slavs off from all contact with Constantinople until the middle of the fifth century when his nomad state collapsed. But the Bulgars now moved across the steppes to the Balkan peninsula where they later founded a state in 679. In the sixth century the Avars followed their kinsmen, the Bulgars, to the Danube and settled in Pannonia in 568. The highway across southern Russia was finally closed in the seventh century by the Khazars who founded a prosperous commercial empire in the region of the lower Don and Volga Rivers. Despite the heavy tribute which they levied on the Slav settlers of southern Russia, the Khazars were regarded as friends and protectors since they stopped further invasions by their Asiatic kinsmen until the tenth century. In the center and north of Russia the Slavs met no resistance, for the Finns welcomed and freely intermarried with the new arrivals.

FORMATION OF THE KIEVAN STATE

In the ninth century the Slavs possessed many important commercial cities along the banks of the Dnieper River and in the region of Lake Ilmen. Each city extended its control over the surrounding territory and was governed by a popular assembly and a council of elder statesmen. For defense the cities hired mercenary soldiers who maintained order and pro-

tected the trade routes. Apparently, as Professor Rostovtzeff points out, this extraordinarily precocious development of city life among the eastern Slavs was an inheritance of the Greco-Iranian civilization of the Scythians and Sarmatians, on which the Slavs built their own civilization. They were assisted in taking over the ancient cities and in organizing their government by invaders from the north who left their Scandinavian homeland in search of adventure. The military prowess and organizing genius of these northmen was very much like that of their kinsmen who established themselves in Normandy, Sicily, and England. The oldest Slav record of the invasion is contained in the famous chronicle of Nestor which gives us the following picturesque account.

"In the year of the world 6360 [A.D. 852] at the accession of the Emperor Michael [III of Constantinople] they began to name the Russian land. . . .

The Varangians² from over the sea laid tribute upon the Chuds and the Slavs (859) . . . They drove the Varangians beyond the sea and paid tribute to them no more. And they set themselves to govern themselves, and there was no justice among them: families disputed with families, and there were discords, and they made war between themselves. Then said they, Let us seek for a prince to reign over us and judge us according to right. And they went beyond the sea of the Varangians and went among the Rus—for these Varangians called themselves Rus—others called themselves Swedes, others Normans, others Angles, others Goths. Our land is great and rich, but there

² Varangian (probably derived from the old Scandinavian word *vaering* or *varing*) was another name for the Northmen or Scandinavian invaders of Russia.

is no order among us; come then and rule and govern us, and three brothers joined together, with their families, and brought them to Rus. They went first among the Slavs, and built the town of Ladoga, and Rurik the eldest established himself at Ladoga; the second Sineus, on the shores of the Belo Ozero; the third, Truvor, at Izborsk."

Other Varangians moved down the Dnieper River and established themselves at Kiev where they set up a powerful state that carried on commerce with Constantinople and often engaged in war with the Byzantine emperors themselves. In 971 Sviatoslav of Kiev became an ally of the emperor and conquered Bulgaria. His new conquest pleased him so well that he planned to transfer his capital to the banks of the Danube River but the following year he met defeat at the hands of John Zimiskes. Sviatoslav was a glorified viking who enjoyed fighting far more than ruling a peaceful state, but his son Vladimir proved to be a statesman as well as a warrior. He made war on Poland, Lithuania, and Constantinople successfully and demanded the hand of Emperor Basil II's sister. In 987 he celebrated his marriage with the Byzantine princess by accepting the Christian faith for himself and his people, an event which brought the eastern Slavs into direct and continuous contact with the Byzantine world and Greek Orthodox Christianity. In the reign of Yaroslav (1016-54) the Kievan state reached the height of its prosperity and power, the ties of religion, commerce, and Byzantine culture tending to unite the people and to bring them into intimate association with Constantinople, the chief commercial center of the Mediter-

ranean and the transmitter of Roman civilization to eastern Slavdom. The court of Yaroslav imitated the ceremonies and life of the Byzantine capital and his famous law code embodied the legal concepts of the *Corpus Juris Civilis* of Justinian and the *Ecloga* of Leo III.

But the death of Yaroslav (1054) ended the heroic epoch of Russian history, which was followed by a period of decline and disintegration caused both by the division of the Kievan state among his six sons and by the renewed invasions of Asiatic nomads. In the next two centuries the Kievan state was further subdivided into sixty-four petty principalities which were ruled by nearly two hundred and fifty princes. Interminable civil wars waged by rival families led to exhaustion and political chaos while the Polovtsy and Pecheneg barbarians freely ravaged the helpless principalities. In 1169 Prince Andrew of Suzdal sacked the city of Kiev itself but the privilege of ruling it as Grand Prince was deemed so small an honor that he did not deign to remain. In 1203 the city was sacked a second time and definitely lost its position of moral supremacy and prestige.

The population of the Kievan state had begun to migrate in three directions long before the destruction of Kiev which was the signal for a great stampede or trek toward the north in the direction of Suzdal. Others had gone to the upper Dnieper and Dvina Rivers around Smolensk and Polotsk where they formed the nucleus of the White Russian people, while still another group migrated to southwestern

Galicia and Volhynia which became the home of the future Ukrainian or Little Russian people.

At Suzdal and in the region of the upper Volga and the Oka Rivers the Kievan emigrants intermarried with the native Finns and founded the Great Russian type. New principalities were organized at Suzdal, Vladimir, Tver, Riazan, Moscow, and other places, of which Moscow (1147) was the most insignificant, a mere village situated near the confluence of the Oka, Volga, and Moskva Rivers. One hundred years later a petty prince chose it as his residence and within the next half century it became a serious rival of Vladimir and Suzdal. The phenomenal rise of Moscow continued in the two following centuries, and in 1462 it became the most powerful principality in the north with a territory as large as modern Germany. The extraordinary development of the Muscovite principality was in a measure due to its favorable geographical location but mostly to the ability of its princes. They resembled the Hohenzollerns of Prussia in character and employed the same methods in creating the Muscovite state. It was a matter of family tradition and pride for each prince to acquire new territory by purchase, colonization, bribery, or conquest. The younger sons, moreover, had the kindness to die early, and Moscow escaped the partition of her territory among the descendants of a ruling prince. Finally the Muscovite rulers knew how to turn to their profit and advantage the greatest calamity that ever befell eastern Slavdom throughout its history.

In the thirteenth century eastern Europe was over-

whelmed by the great Mongol invasion that followed the organization of the empire of Jenghiz Khan in Central Asia (1206). The Grand Khan attacked Korea and China successfully, conquered Central Asia, and extended his influence to the borders of India and Asia Minor before his death in 1227. Two of his ablest generals, Jebe and Subotai, invaded southern Russia (1224) with an army of 25,000 men and decisively crushed the united contingents of the Slav principalities at Kalka. Thirteen years later a grandson of Jenghiz Khan named Batu invaded Russia with the intention of organizing a Mongol empire in Europe. His armies advanced northward and devastated the territories of Riazan, Moscow, Suzdal, Vladimir, Tver, and other principalities as far as Novgorod. In 1240 Batu Khan sacked Kiev on his way to western Europe. He annihilated the Hungarian army and ravaged southern Poland and Silesia where, on the urgent behest of the Pope, the chivalry of all Europe gathered to stop the victorious march of the Asiatic horde. At Liegnitz (1241) the opposing armies engaged in battle and western chivalry was defeated. Batu Khan now contemplated an invasion of France when he was suddenly called to Central Asia to take part in the election of a Grand Khan. It was the death of a Mongol chieftain in Asia that saved western Europe from a terrible fate, for no western host could have withstood the excellently trained and carefully disciplined Mongol armies which were led by the foremost strategists and tacticians of the age.

Russia, however, did not escape the conqueror, for

Batu Khan set up an empire in the steppes of the south and subdued all the principalities. For nearly two and a half centuries the princes of Russia were constrained to lead their respective contingents in the military service of the Khan of the Golden Horde. In times of peace they had to appear before the Khan at regular intervals to do homage and to receive the *iarlykh* or patent of office; finally, they were held responsible for the collection of tribute levied by the conqueror. The moral effect of the Mongol conquest on the Russian people was pernicious. Rival princes grovelled before the Khan in self-abasement and begged his support against their opponents. Intrigue, treachery, slander, cruelty, and cunning became the stock-in-trade of a successful prince who did not hesitate to unload his bag of tricks upon the people whom he governed.

Most successful in all these arts of intrigue, cunning, and deceit was the first great founder of the Muscovite principality, Ivan Kalita (1328-41). He won the favor of the Grand Khan and secured for the princes of Moscow the odious but profitable privilege of collecting the annual tribute for the Golden Horde. Incidentally the Muscovite princes, acting as official tax collectors, gained financial supervision over all their rivals and could always count on Mongol aid in reducing powerful principalities to submission. Ivan, for instance, raised the prestige and power of his principality by transferring the residence of the chief bishop of the Orthodox Church and the coveted title of Grand Prince from Vladimir to Moscow. The Mon-

gol Khan was handsomely rewarded by the clever prince for granting permission for these changes, but gradually Ivan Kalita prepared the way for the unification of Russia under the aegis of Moscow in spite of the unsavory reputation gained as a result of his treachery in dealing with rival princes and his close friendship with the Mongol ruler.

But the odious manner in which the princes of Moscow acquired political power and prestige at the expense of their rivals was soon forgotten, for Moscow translated her financial, political, and religious supremacy into a national leadership when Dmitri Donskoi, the third successor of Ivan Kalita, dared to oppose the Mongols in battle at Kulikovo on the Don River in 1380. The Muscovite success at Kulikovo was no decisive event from the military point of view, for Dmitri was forced to submit to the conqueror, but it was undoubtedly a tremendous moral victory for Moscow. She became the champion of the oppressed Russian nation and her princes received the homage accorded a ruler chosen by God to lead his people out of bondage. Dmitri became a great national hero and founded a tradition of leadership that resulted in the ultimate triumph of Moscow over the Golden Horde. The Mongol rulers eschewed the policy of *divide et impera* and preferred to support Moscow until it was too late to check the ambition of the Muscovite dynasty. Kulikovo was a challenge and a warning to the Golden Horde, which perished ignominiously one hundred years later in 1480 as a result of its mistaken policy.

Summarized briefly, the history of medieval Slavdom reveals the gradual expansion of the Slavs from their central homeland in the Pripet River basin over the major portion of Europe extending from the city of Hamburg in the northwest to the Peloponnesus in the southwest and from modern Bavaria in the west to the Volga River in the east. In the ninth century this more or less united Slav world was torn asunder by the invasion of Asiatic Magyars whose settlement in Hungary permanently divided the Slavs into three groups. These lost contact with their homeland and developed into separate nations under varying circumstances. The Poles and Czechs accepted Roman Catholicism and were assimilated to the civilization of western Europe under the pressure of German political and cultural influence. Serbia, Bulgaria, Montenegro, and Roumania received their civilization and religion from Constantinople, enjoyed a brief period of prestige and power in the Balkan peninsula, and passed under the sway of the Ottoman Turk in the fourteenth century. The eastern group founded states at Kiev, in Galicia, and at Moscow before they succumbed to Mongolian domination in the thirteenth century. Two centuries later the Muscovite state shook off the Mongol yoke and laid the foundations of the later Russian Empire.

II

FOUNDATION OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE

SOCIAL CLASSES

THE history of Russia from its origin to the sixteenth century reveals a conflict between three traditions of government—democratic, aristocratic, and monarchical. In the early Kievan period of the tenth century democratic institutions prevailed when all political authority was vested in the *veche* or assembly. Although a class of people's *boyars*¹ developed and formed the nucleus of a territorial nobility, it was closely watched and its authority was limited by the *veche*. Only with the arrival of the Normans did the aristocratic tradition gain in strength, for the Norman princes with their body-guards or *druzhina* formed a well-defined military caste that offered protection and assisted the Slavs in organizing a state. The new class of *boyars* created by the Normans soon mingled with the older Slav nobility to form a new aristocracy headed by the princes who regarded themselves several degrees higher in the social scale than the *druzhina* forming the rank and file of the *boyar* class. Among the princes, the descendants of Rurik and Vladimir received special honor as the oldest ruling family, whose senior member bore the title of Grand Prince of Kiev. All Russia was

¹ Distinguished citizens of wealth and influence in a democratic community or freemen retainers of a prince who developed into an aristocracy.

considered the common property of this family, and the princes were assigned to various towns for defense and exploitation on the basis of seniority. The older princes received the more important cities as their appanage while the younger members were assigned to minor posts. On the death of the Grand Prince of Kiev promotions followed all along the line as each prince advanced to the next higher post. This system of rotation in appanages not only strengthened family loyalty but also contributed toward the unification of the Russian lands.

The *druzhina-boyars* were attached to the princes by a voluntary agreement and could migrate at will from one principality to another in search of a better contract of service. Below the *boyar* class were the peasants, known as *smerdy* or free peasants when cultivating their own lands independently, and *zakup* or half-free when they worked on the lands of a *boyar*. The latter were personally free but often were economically dependent on the *boyar* from whom they had borrowed equipment for cultivating the soil. A numerous slave class of prisoners taken in war also existed.

Throughout the Kievan period (ca. 900-1300) this aristocratic organization of principalities existed alongside the democratic institutions of the numerous towns which preserved their assemblies. Some of the princes (Vladimir and Yaroslav) succeeded in strengthening their authority and ruling as monarchs in imitation of the absolutist tendencies of Byzantine emperors, but their experiment did not last long enough to overpower the democratic and aristocratic traditions.

The destruction of the Kievan state, however, and the development of a new center of Russian life in the northeast resulted in the establishment of a new social and political order that prepared the way for the triumph of monarchy. The principalities founded in the region of the upper Volga and Oka Rivers were the personal creation of individual princes who invited colonists, founded churches, and built towns without *veches*. The old tradition of rotation in appanages no longer appealed to these princes who considered their domains personal property and took great pride in their individual achievements as founders of powerful principalities. Furthermore it was much more difficult to preserve the tradition of unity in a primitive and poor agricultural country than in the land of cities along the busy highway of the Dnieper River. Commerce and trade were the basis of Kievan economy, but in the new Russia the possession of land was the basis of economic, political, and social prestige. Since land was the standard of value the *boyars* of the northeast formed a landed aristocracy which preferred to remain at home rather than roam about from one ruling prince to another in search of better conditions of service. The princes, moreover, rewarded long and faithful service by granting additional increments of land to their followers. The old free lance *druzhina* rapidly disappeared together with the *veche* in this region of autocratic princes who strengthened their own authority at the expense of the old democratic elements in Russian society. The ruling princes distributed lands, maintained their own armies, and

fought with their neighbors after the fashion of feudal barons in western Europe. Even the forms of land tenure resembled the practice of western feudalism. The *votchina* was an hereditary grant of land returnable to the prince on demand, but the more common *pomiestie* resembled the western fief, for it was land granted on condition of service and revoked when that service ceased.

By the fourteenth century Russia had developed a number of institutions resembling western feudalism, but this process was rudely halted by the phenomenal rise of the princes of Moscow who accepted Mongol support in establishing the traditions of absolute monarchy and central government at the expense of rival princes. In addition the Muscovite princes, like Louis XI of France, knew how to turn these traditions of incipient feudalism to the service of their own cause, for they made military service the basis of land ownership and carefully defined the obligations of the *pomiestie* tenure. Ivan IV accurately defined the size of a land unit capable of supporting a fully equipped fighting man and exacted service from his *boyars* on the basis of the number of such land units each had in his possession. He popularized the idea that every man who rendered service to the state must own land and that every man who owned land must render service. In this way he hastened the process of fusion of all the allodial and *votchina* tenures with the *pomiestie* which became the most common tenure by the seventeenth century, when it tended to become hereditary. *Boyars* on the *pomiestie* tenure gradually formed a new class

of nobility known as the *dvoriani*, gentry or *pomiestchik* lords. Their lot was not enviable, for they owed lifelong service to the state. But as servants of the state they received special privileges and economic support from the government, which sacrificed the interests of the peasantry in their behalf. Thus the reduction of the gentry to a status of bondage to the state was logically followed by the enserfment of the peasants.

In the early development of the Russian state the vast majority of the peasants known as *krestiani* were free and retained that status until the sixteenth century. They generally inhabited the fertile region of the Black Lands which belonged to the government and were parcelled out among the peasants on a customary hereditary tenure in return for rent or taxes. The peasants had freedom of movement and might rent lands from private individuals or monasteries as well. With the development of the *pomiestie* tenure following the reign of Ivan IV, however, and the rise of a new class of *pomiestchiks* or nobility of service, the government divided the Black Lands among the nobles who became the intermediaries between the peasants and the state. Henceforth the *pomiestchik* lords collected revenues from the peasants for their own use and acted as agents for the government in collecting taxes. Gradually the new nobility came to regard itself as the guardians of the peasantry and exploited it in their own interests. Since their lands had value only when cultivated, the nobles determined to check the peasants' freedom of movement by fixing them to

the soil. This process caused great resentment among the peasants and the bolder spirits absconded to the south and east to escape the arm of the landlord. When the nobles persisted in their attempt to fasten the peasant to the soil there was a veritable exodus to the region of the steppes, and the gentry were again placed in a ruinous economic position for lack of laborers. An appeal to the government for assistance resulted in the passage of measures forbidding the peasant to leave an estate if he failed to discharge his financial obligations to the lord, while those peasants who had paid off their debts were allowed to change their abodes once a year on St. George's Day. For carrying out these measures the government ordered the registration of all the peasants on land rolls. Registration facilitated police supervision and collection of taxes but it did not satisfy the gentry who determined to fix the peasants to the soil permanently. Accordingly, in default of legislation, the gentry took the law into their own hands and forcibly detained their agricultural laborers on the ground that they had failed to pay their financial obligations. Gradually as a result of administrative practice, custom, the pressure of debt, and the determination of the gentry the peasants lost their freedom of movement by the end of the sixteenth century and in the middle of the seventeenth century laws were passed legalizing these practices of the gentry in attaching the peasant to the soil.

THE COSSACKS

The peasants who escaped the government regulations of Russia and Poland by fleeing to the region of the steppes often mingled with the nomad Tartars who called them Cossacks. In time these liberty-loving frontiersmen organized two great democratic communities, one in the valley of the Don River and another beside the waterfalls of the Dnieper River. In times of peace, chief authority in these communities was vested in a popularly elected council responsible to the democracy as a whole. In war time, authority was vested in a popularly elected chief or *hetman* who was a virtual dictator for the duration of the campaign. But even this leader had to give an account of his stewardship upon the conclusion of a campaign. The Polish writer, Sienkiewicz, gives us an admirable description of Cossack life in his well-known trilogy: *With Fire and Sword*, *Pan Michael*, and *The Deluge*. A more detailed account of their turbulent existence may be found in the prose epic, *Taras Bulba*, of the great Russian writer, Gogol, who tells us, "There was no craft the Cossack did not know; he could make wine, build a cart, grind powder, do a farrier's or a goldsmith's work, and last but not least, riot and drink as only a Russian can; it all came natural to him." In time of war, however, "A captain had but to enter the squares and market-places of a Cossack settlement or village, stand up on a cart and cry out: 'Hark ye, ye beer-swillers and brewers! Enough of this ale-brewing, yea, and wallowing on stoves, yea, feeding the flies

with your greasy bodies! Come to, and win knightly fame and honor! And ye plowmen and mowers, sheep-tenders, and women-lovers! Enough of following the plow, shoving your greasy boots in the earth, yea, dangling after women and wasting knightly strength. . . .' And these words were ever as sparks falling on dry wood. The plowman broke his plow, the brewers and beer-vendors left their vats and smashed their barrels, the craftsman and trader sent their craft to the devil, broke all the pots in the house, and sprang into saddle. . . . When the campaign was over the warrior returned to his meadows and pastures by the Dnieper River fords,—went a-fishing, bought and sold, brewed beer, and was, in short, an independent Cossack."

THE FOUNDATION OF THE EMPIRE

The reign of Ivan the Great (1462-1505) marked a transition from the medieval Muscovite principality to the foundation of a Russian Empire. Like his able predecessors, Ivan III proved to be a tenacious, persistent, crafty, cruel but extremely capable ruler. He belonged to the generation of Louis XI and Henry VII who created modern France and England, and like his contemporaries he knew how to be both the lion and the fox in undermining incipient feudalism in Russia. The principalities of the north fell into his hands one by one. The annexations of Yaroslav (1463), Rostov (1474), Tver (1485), Viatka (1489), and Novgorod (1471) which furnished Moscow with an outlet on the Baltic and Arctic Seas, reveal the story of his tenacious

and unscrupulous activity. The dispossessed princes, moreover, were constrained to enter the service of Moscow as officers in the new administrative and military organization created for the governance of an empire which was trebled in size during the lifetime of Ivan the Great.

In his relations with Poland and the Golden Horde Ivan was extremely cautious, preferring diplomatic intrigue to war, for he was well aware of the weakness of his newly created empire.

The Golden Horde continued to levy tribute which Moscow paid regularly while she secretly incited the Tartar Khan of the Crimea in 1474 to make war on her Mongol oppressor. Six years later the Khan of the Golden Horde determined to punish the treacherous Muscovite prince and led his Mongol host northward to the Ugra River. Ivan drew up his army on the opposite shore only to withdraw to a strongly fortified position a short distance from the river, for he had no desire to risk a decisive engagement that might ruin the work of many generations in the creation of the Muscovite State. Although denounced by his contemporaries as a coward, he patiently awaited the advance of the enemy. For three weeks the two armies stood facing each other when the Mongols, observing the strong position of the enemy, finally withdrew without a battle. But on their return toward the south they encountered a rival host of Nogai Tartars and were decisively defeated. The power of the Golden Horde was broken by a Tartar chieftain but Ivan the Great nevertheless received the honor of emancipating Russia

from Mongol rule. His patient and cautious policy had triumphed. In addition, Ivan's ally, Mengli Girei, Tatar Khan of the Crimea, fell upon the old capital of the Mongol Horde at Sarai (1502) and utterly destroyed it.

The memorable year 1480 ended an epoch of Mongolian supremacy, and in the same year Ivan the Great began a new era in Russian foreign policy by taking the offensive against a more formidable and dangerous enemy, the Kingdom of Poland.

In the thirteenth century Lithuania, a great buffer state between Poland and Russia, seized the entire basin of the Dnieper River and annexed large territories in western and southwestern Russia. The Muscovite princes, however, did not look upon Lithuanian expansion with great alarm for the country was largely Greek Orthodox in religion and under Russian influence in civilization. But the union of Poland and Lithuania in 1386 had assimilated the latter to western Europe and exposed it to the influence of Roman Catholicism. There was every reason to believe that the Russian lands annexed to Lithuania would be definitely lost. Ivan the Great soon discovered that he could not carry out his policy of uniting all the Russian lands, for Poland and Lithuania refused to relinquish those in their possession. Furthermore many Russian princes who had been despoiled of their lands by Moscow fled for safety and aid to the enemy that blocked Muscovite expansion westward. The keynote of Ivan's foreign policy and that of every Russian sovereign down to the extinction of Poland-Lithuania in the eighteenth century was antagonism to Poland,

but he was not prepared to attack the enemy openly and had to resort to diplomatic intrigue.

Adopting the tactics which proved so successful against the Golden Horde, Ivan sought the alliance of Poland's enemies in western Europe only to discover that Russia had no standing in the family of civilized nations. Undaunted by failure, he sought and obtained social respectability by securing the services of the Holy See itself in negotiating a marriage with Sophia Paleologus, the niece of the last Emperor of Constantinople. The pope, hoping to prepare the way for a union of the Greek Orthodox and Catholic churches, sought the alliance of Russia for a crusade against the Turk. The marriage was celebrated but Ivan at once turned a deaf ear to the project of church unity and the crusade, for neither proposal seemed to him conducive to the best interests of Russia.

Upon her arrival in Russia, Sophia transformed the Muscovite household into a Byzantine court of elaborate etiquette and ceremony. Her husband assumed an imperial attitude and withdrew into seclusion, to appear only on grand occasions. Adopting the double eagle of the Byzantine Empire for his coat-of-arms, he claimed descent from Cæsar Augustus and assumed a status equal to that of the Holy Roman Emperor, in which he styled himself "by the Grace of God, Tsar (Cæsar), Autocrat, Lord of All Russia, Grand Prince of Moscow, Prince of Tver, etc."

In Russia also Ivan's prestige increased enormously, for he was regarded by his people as a chosen lieutenant of God on earth, and Moscow figured as the

"Third Rome" with a divine mission to preserve and protect the Orthodox Faith. The monk, Philotheus, in the succeeding reign summarized the divine mission of Moscow when he pointed out that the center of the civilized world had shifted from Rome to Constantinople and then to Moscow. "Two Romes had fallen and a third stands, while a fourth is not to be." Holy Russia stood alone in the world as the sole representative of Orthodoxy, for Constantinople forfeited her leadership at the Council of Florence in 1439 and suffered a just punishment fourteen years later (1453) at the hands of the infidel Turk.

Having entered the family of respectable nations with great *éclat*, Ivan concluded an alliance with the Holy Roman Emperor against Poland in the year 1491, and the close friendship which Russia established with the Empire lasted until the eighteenth century on the basis of common antagonism to Poland and later to Turkey. In 1493 he signed a treaty of alliance with Denmark against Sweden as the common enemy, and that classic alliance was renewed periodically for three hundred years. The dream of Ivan was fulfilled, for he ended the diplomatic isolation of Russia and brought his people into closer contact with western civilization.

Basil III (1505-33) continued the policies of his father by annexing Pskov and Riazan but he was unsuccessful in his war with Poland-Lithuania. At home he ruled as an autocrat and rigorously suppressed the discontented *boyars*. "He has unlimited control over life and property, none dare differ with him. The will

of the prince is the will of God," wrote the observant traveler, Herberstein.

This rigid suppression of the *boyars*, however, resulted in a violent reaction when Ivan the Dread, also called Ivan the Terrible (1533-84) ascended the throne at the age of three under the regency of his mother. The government fell into the hands of rival *boyar* families, the Bielski and Shuiski clans, who disrupted the state with civil war and humiliated the young ruler. "They rode about among the cities and towns and plundered citizens without mercy, and such evils they did upon their neighbors as it is impossible to number," wrote Ivan IV, who spent the first fourteen years of his reign in seclusion studying sacred texts and developing a martyr complex that verged on mental abnormality. At the age of seventeen (1547) Ivan suddenly announced his intention to rule in his own right and celebrated the event by summarily executing the leader of the formidable Shuiski clan. Three years later he reformed the government, codified the laws, and reduced the power of the clergy, and by 1564 regarded his position sufficiently strong to warrant a trial of strength with the *boyars* whom he sought to intimidate by a reign of terror. His ingenious plan of attack confirmed the *boyars* in their belief that Ivan was insane but they were soon to learn that there was method in his madness. The country was divided into two districts, the *oprichnina*, ruled exclusively and directly by the Tsar, and the *zemshchina*, which retained the old form of government under *boyar* control.

The purpose of this dual system of government was not at first apparent, for Ivan concealed his determination to undermine the power and influence of the entire *boyar* class. It was soon evident, however, that he was setting up a large domain for himself to which he might transfer all his loyal friends who would support him in a struggle with the nobility, hoping furthermore to demonstrate the efficiency of unhampered autocratic rule as compared with the civil strife and inefficiency prevalent in the lands under *boyar* control. In this way Ivan fortified himself against his enemies to the end of his reign.

While struggling with the *boyars* the energetic autocrat also found time to attack and destroy the Khanates of Kazan (1552) and Astrakhan (1556) which were annexed to Russia. These important acquisitions gave to the empire control of the entire basin of the Volga River and opened large stretches of territory in the east to colonization.

In 1558 Ivan challenged his western enemies, Poland and Sweden, by invading Livonia and Esthonia. The war which followed lasted twenty-five years. At first the Russian armies succeeded in holding their enemies in check, but the tide turned when the able warrior, King Stephen Báthory of Poland, defeated the Muscovite army and Ivan was forced to sign the Truce of Pskov (1582). Like his predecessors, he learned that Russia was not yet ready to challenge successfully the power of a western nation, although every Russian ruler since Ivan III has considered it his sacred duty

to make war on Poland and Sweden to ensure Russia's expansion westward.

The death of Ivan IV in 1584 was the signal for another violent outbreak against the harsh rule of the autocrat. The *boyars* intimidated the weak and inexperienced ruler, Theodore I (1584-98), who preferred the life of a religious recluse to the trials of governing a great empire. But their exultation was premature, for Theodore associated with himself his future brother-in-law, Boris Godunov, a courageous, wise, and ambitious *boyar* of Tartar lineage, who immediately suppressed the revolt. Boris ruled Russia in the name of the Tsar and on the death of Theodore in 1598 usurped the throne, which he held until his own death in 1604. This event left no one to restrain the lawless *boyars*, for the dynasty had died out. Rival families sought to place their candidates on the throne, and Russia entered upon a period of anarchy known as the "Troublous Times." In 1606 Basil Shuiski seized the throne but was unable to win the confidence of the nation. His enemies called upon the Cossacks of the south and of Poland for assistance in deposing the usurper, and all Russia was devastated by war. Four years later they succeeded when the Polish general, Zolkiewski, captured Moscow, and then secured the election of Ladislas, the Polish crown prince, as Tsar of Russia. This victory of Poland over Russia seemed to end decisively the age long struggle for supremacy between the two great Slav nations. But in the hour of her deepest degradation Russia produced two lowly champions, Minin and Pozharski, who led the patriots

in a national war against the invaders. The Russian people expelled the foreigner and elected a native prince, Michael Romanov (1613-45) to the throne of the tsars.

THE ROMANOVS

The Romanovs were a comparatively obscure family, and for that very reason Michael Romanov was the most available candidate since the more powerful and ancient families would never have consented to the elevation of one of their rivals to the throne. On the other hand this Romanov tsar lacked the tradition, prestige and power to impose his will on the people, and his rule of necessity had to conform to the interests of the powerful *boyars*. For example, he yielded to the wishes of the nobility in legalizing the enserfment of the peasants who had lost their freedom as a result of administrative practice in the sixteenth century.

In foreign affairs also Michael adopted a conservative policy in order to devote his time to putting his house in order. The Truce of Deulino in 1618 ended the war with Poland which retained the important territories of Smolensk and Seversk. Sixteen years later Michael reorganized his armies with the assistance of European instructors and mercenaries and attacked Poland but was decisively defeated. By the terms of the Treaty of Polianovka (1634) the Tsar renounced all his rights to Esthonia, Livonia, and Courland and paid an indemnity of 200,000 rubles.

In the reign of Alexis (1645-76) the eternal conflict between Poland and Russia was partially liqui-

dated, for Poland like Russia now entered upon her period of "Troublous Times." In 1648 Bogdan Chmielnicki led the frontiersmen (Cossacks) of southern Poland in rebellion against the Polish landlords who encroached upon the liberties of the freebooters of the Ukraine. Defeated by the Polish army, Chmielnicki (1654) placed his Cossacks under the protection of Russia. In the same year Tsar Alexis seized the opportunity to invade Lithuania from the east while the adventurous King of Sweden invaded Poland in the north. Attacked by three enemies from as many different directions, Poland was overwhelmed. Charles X of Sweden captured Warsaw and Cracow (1655), and proclaimed himself King of Poland-Lithuania. However, in the midst of this deluge of foreign armies, Poland produced an able military leader who rallied the patriots and with the diplomatic and military support of Sweden's enemies expelled the invaders. Sweden withdrew from the war after signing the Peace of Oliva in 1660 and gave Poland a free hand in dealing with the Russians who continued the war unsuccessfully for seven more years.

The Truce of Andrusovo (1667) provided for the partition of the Ukraine between Poland and Russia. All the territory east of the Dnieper River remained under Polish rule while the lands west of that river were retained by the Cossacks under the protection of Russia. In the northeast the districts of Vitebsk, Polotsk, and southern Livonia were annexed by the Tsar but Smolensk and Seversk remained a part of Poland-Lithuania.

The Polish and Russian envoys who negotiated the Truce of Andrusovo regarded the agreement as a temporary *modus vivendi* but it proved to be a reasonable settlement between the two states and was accepted as a definitive settlement in 1686. It was the first statesmanlike attempt to liquidate the age-long quarrel between the two powerful Slav states, and during the last ten years of his reign Alexis cooperated with Poland in opposing the common enemies, Turkey and Sweden.

PETER THE GREAT

"Barbarous Asiatics" was still the epithet employed by western Europeans when speaking of the Russian people in the reign of Peter the Great (1682-1725). Greek Orthodox Christianity and Byzantine civilization differentiated the Russian mind from the western European. Travelers were impressed by the distinctly oriental character of this country of strange customs, uncouth peasants, and unbelievably barbarous officials, the result of the influence perhaps of two and a half centuries of Mongol rule. The Russian people themselves were pleased to emphasize the difference between eastern and western civilization. They made a virtue of necessity and glorified the sacred mission of the "Third Rome" to preserve Byzantine civilization and religion unimpaired. They had no desire to dally with the seductions of western culture, isolated as they were by the well-guarded frontiers of Turkey, Poland, and Sweden. Gaining little stimulus from the outside world, the Russian mind turned inward upon itself and

found happiness in exalting the ancient traditions of Muscovy and the formalism of Greek Orthodoxy which received as much veneration in Russia as did the Confucian classics in China. Russia lived on her past.

But Peter the Great started a new era in the history of his country. With the irritability and impatience of genius, he broke with the past, turned his back on the old traditions, and began a process of intensive Europeanization that has been paralleled in more modern times by the revolutionary transformation of Japan. The accomplishment of a gigantic task of this nature required statesmanship and heroic determination. Did Peter possess these qualities? Was Russia ready to accept his guidance? The answer to these questions will be found if we examine his career.

When Alexis, who anticipated some of the reforms of Peter the Great, died in 1676, he left two sons, Theodore and Ivan, by his first wife, Maria Miloslavski, and one son by his second wife, Natalia Naryshkin. Theodore III (1676-82) like his brother Ivan was a weakling, and the government was carried on by the Miloslavski family. On the death of Theodore the *boyars* passed over the claims of Ivan and chose as their Tsar the vigorous and healthy young son of Natalia Naryshkin named Peter. But the Miloslavski faction refused to abide by this decision, and Sophia, the most vigorous of eight daughters of Tsar Alexis by his first wife, secured the support of the royal guards or *Streltsi* and executed a *coup d'état* by proclaiming Ivan and Peter joint rulers with herself as regent. Thus began a bitter family rivalry that ended in the

shedding of much blood. At the age of ten, the future Peter the Great lived in constant fear of his relatives and even witnessed the murder in cold blood of his mother's relatives in the palace itself. These events profoundly influenced the character of the impressionable boy and exerted considerable influence on the policy of his reign in later years.

Sophia was the virtual ruler of Russia from 1682 to 1689. She sent Peter away from court to the country villa of Preobrazhenskoe where, neglected by the court, he was allowed to amuse himself with boon companions of his own choice. The precocious boy received no systematic education and devoted all his time to playing soldier. Foreign adventurers from the "German Colony" in the vicinity helped Peter to organize his pleasure battalions and taught him to play war games. Unnoticed by the court, these pleasure battalions swelled to enormous proportions and were paid by the state. When he became of age in 1694 Peter had a well-trained and loyal army of 30,000 soldiers. In like manner the young Tsar succeeded in founding a Russian navy, and many of his stable-boy friends and grooms became admirals and generals.

In 1689 Peter's relatives staged a *coup d'état* with the aid of the *boyars* and forced Sophia to enter a nunnery. Peter was elevated to supreme power in the state but seemed to take little interest in government, preferring still to amuse himself with his pleasure battalions, much to the disgust of the Russian public. To vindicate himself he decided to perform a great feat (1694) which was nothing less than the capture of

Azov from the Turks. He organized the expedition the next year with all the enthusiasm of a schoolboy but failed to take his prize. Undaunted by failure, he returned to the charge with more adequate equipment and succeeded in capturing the city (1696), Russia thereby gaining an outlet to the Black Sea.

Elated by this initial success and profoundly impressed by the supreme importance of the technical training his advisers and friends possessed, Peter determined to secure an education. In 1697 he organized a "million dollar trip" to Europe for himself and his companions with the two-fold purpose of securing this training in the West and of organizing a league of Christian states for a war against Turkey. The Swiss, Lefort, and Golovin were appointed ambassadors extraordinary while Peter travelled incognito in their train of two hundred and fifty students and servants as plain "Corporal Peter Mikhailov of the Preobrazhenskoe Regiment." In Brandenburg he was most cordially received although the Elector Frederick was considerably discomfited by the boorish manners and the ungovernable temper of his guest. Passing through Hanover, Peter was also received by the future wife of King Frederick of Prussia. Although very shy in meeting the ladies at court, he did not fail to notice the stiffness of their corset stays which he mistook for bones! In Holland he became an apprentice shipbuilder and incidentally practised dentistry on members of the party. At London he took a short course in shipbuilding and caught a glimpse of parliament on which occasion he remarked that a similar

institution might be established in Russia. Obviously Peter's education was superficial, for he failed to grasp the meaning of much that he saw. At Vienna the young corporal soon learned that the emperor had no desire to enter a league against the Turk. He prepared to leave for Venice when unpleasant news of a revolt at Moscow forced him to hasten home by way of Poland. On the way he found time to entertain his boon companion, the hard drinking Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, with whom he cemented a friendship that was to bear fruit in a later alliance against the King of Sweden.

Upon his return from the West in 1698, Peter suppressed the revolt of the Streltsi and determined to awaken his people from their long sleep. But the most active elements of Russian society represented by the *boyars*, the Streltsi, and the Patriarch craved the good old days and openly resisted any innovation or change. Longing for the restoration of the Miloslavski regency, the Streltsi revolted, while the Patriarch, who in the opinion of the Tsar, was the embodiment of conservatism, guided the ignorant masses in their denunciation of all ideas introduced from the West as the innovations of a false Tsar and Anti-Christ. The *boyars* resented Peter's policy of elevating grooms and pie vendors like Menshikov to the highest positions of honor and power in the state. The young Tsar realized that he faced a solid wall of conservatism, but dealt with it in his characteristic manner.

The Streltsi were shown no mercy. A liberal application of torture and the knout brought forth con-

fessions that implicated thousands, while two thousand of their number were executed in the public square of Moscow as an example for others, Peter himself wielding the executioner's ax with much gusto. It must have been a sweet revenge for the young barbarian who was mindful of the terror and humiliation they imposed on him in his boyhood days. Although the Patriarch was not molested as long as he lived, at his death in 1700, the functions of his office were committed to a Holy Synod nominated and controlled by the Tsar. In 1721 the Patriarchate was definitely abolished, and the church permanently subordinated to the state.

The *boyars* were further humbled by the creation of a new nobility of service based on Peter's scheme of fourteen ranks or grades into which the important offices in the army, navy, and the civil service were classified. Any person who achieved one of the first eight offices in any of the three branches of service acquired *ipso facto* nobility for life; those who rose above the eighth rank acquired hereditary nobility. As their fortunes were obviously dependent on the success of his reforms, Peter thereby strengthened the reform party at the expense of the old conservative nobility.

Having dealt with the opposition at home, the young Tsar then turned his attention to foreign affairs. Russia was desperately in need of a seaport, an outlet to the high seas and to western Europe. The acquisition of Azov in the south in 1696 proved of little value as long as the Turkish sultan held the Dardanelles, and there was little prospect of driving the Turk out of Europe

by means of a Christian League. The age of crusades had vanished, and the nations of western Europe were engrossed in strengthening their defences against the ascendancy of Louis XIV. When his Turkish plans miscarried, Peter turned a sympathetic ear toward Poland, where Augustus II was negotiating with the King of Denmark and the Swedish renegade, Patkul, for a joint attack against Sweden. Here was an opportunity to gain an outlet to the Baltic Sea by seizing the Swedish possessions in Livonia from the boy-king Charles XII. Accordingly on January 26, 1699, Russia signed the Treaty of Carlowitz with Turkey and in November concluded an alliance with Augustus II and King Frederick of Denmark for a war against Sweden in the north.

Augustus and Frederick started the Great Northern War in the beginning of the year 1700 and called upon Peter to fulfill his obligations under the treaty, but the latter postponed this action until certain of the attitude of the Sultan of Turkey. In August of the same year Russia signed a definitive treaty of peace with Turkey, and Peter invaded Livonia. For two months the Russians besieged Narva, when on November 17, 1700, they received the astonishing news that Charles XII, who had already defeated Denmark, would be in the vicinity of Narva within twenty-four hours. The suddenness of Charles's arrival struck consternation in the ranks of the besieging army. Although the Swedish expeditionary forces numbered only 8,000 men as compared with the Russian army of 40,000, the latter, badly equipped and ill-trained, fled in a panic

before the impetuous attack of the enemy. Peter was among the first to flee. It was a disgraceful scene which justified the bitter remark of Augustus II's general, Hallart, that the Tsar and his army "have about as much courage as a frog has hair on its belly."

Russia was saved from disaster by the vindictiveness and folly of Charles XII, who was a military genius but no statesman. Instead of following up his victory at Narva and pressing home his advantage against Peter the Great, he allowed himself to be drawn into Poland in wild pursuit of his most hated enemy, Augustus II. While he gained personal satisfaction in the humiliation and deposition of Augustus from the throne of Poland in 1706, Charles lost nine valuable years attempting to find his way through the labyrinth of Polish politics. Meanwhile Peter the Great gained the necessary respite from war to organize a well-trained army, and when Charles XII finally marched into southern Russia with his jaded army, the Russians met him at Poltava, June 27, 1709, and delivered a crushing blow that scattered the Swedish host to the four winds. Wounded and bleeding, the King of Sweden fled from the field of battle and did not rest until he found safety within the frontiers of the Ottoman Empire.

Charles now succeeded in drawing the sultan into a war with Russia. Peter accepted the challenge by invading Moldavia and Wallachia in 1711, but maneuvered his army so unhappily that he was surrounded by the enemy in the region of the Pruth River. There seemed to be no prospect of relief other than sur-

render, when Peter experienced another astonishing stroke of good luck. Through the resourcefulness of his wife, Catherine, he succeeded in negotiating a truce with the Turkish commander, who allowed his quarry to escape in return for an agreement restoring Azov and the surrounding territory to the sultan.

Meanwhile the Russian forces continued the war with Sweden in the north and compelled the Swedish government to conclude the Treaty of Nystad on August 30, 1721, which provided for the cession of Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and Karelia to Russia. Peter's dream was realized; Russia gained her most valuable outlet to the Baltic Sea. The next year he made war on the Shah of Persia, which resulted in the cession to Russia of the western seaboard of the Caspian Sea.

In viewing the foreign policy of Peter the Great as a whole, we cannot escape the conclusion that he was eminently successful in accomplishing his purpose. Russia's isolation was broken, and outlets were gained on the Baltic, the Black, and the Caspian Seas. The battle of Poltava dramatically raised Russia to the status of a first rate European power, and by the same token Sweden fell to the rank of a third rate state. While the monarchs of western Europe struggled for victory in the War of the Spanish Succession, Peter gained a free hand in eastern Europe. He restored Augustus II to the throne of Poland, establishing a precedent for interference in Polish politics that paved the way for the brilliant diplomacy of Catherine II in the Partitions of Poland of the eighteenth century.

REFORMS OF PETER THE GREAT

For twenty-one years during the reign of Peter the Great Russia was at war. This fact alone reveals the primary purpose of the Tsar's policy of reform. Medieval Russia fought modern Sweden, and Peter gained the victory by modernizing his country. He aimed to increase the activity and improve the efficiency of his people by simplifying the complex social, political, and economic structure of Russian society which was smothered by the accumulated customs of centuries of barbarous ignorance. Victory was conditioned upon the development of the natural resources of the country and by the stimulation of industry, commerce, and trade. But the mass psychology of the Russian people was averse to change, and Peter was forced to play the rôle of a benevolent tyrant.

When he returned from his educational tour of the west, Peter ordered his people about with little consideration for their feelings and prejudices. Russians were instructed to shave their flowing beards, to discard the oriental kaftan for western breeches, and to acquire the habit of smoking tobacco. To be sure, the Old Believers and strictly Orthodox Holy Men received some consideration, for they were allowed to retain their beards on the payment of a tax, and were identified by a license tag bearing the inscription, "A beard is a useless inconvenience." Women were dragged out of the seclusion of their homes and forced to attend periodic receptions at court where they were expected to converse, dance, and play games in ap-

proved western fashion. The court banquets and receptions were exceedingly stiff affairs, regulated by a meticulous code of etiquette which was not infringed upon until the brandy was passed. Then the party became very informal for the Russian was in his element. Being a physical giant, accustomed to strong drink, Peter surpassed his guests by drinking them all under the table. Outwardly Russian society seemed to be Europeanized, but its civilization was very superficial. A thin veneer of western culture concealed the barbarian and suggested the old saying, "Scratch a Russian and you will find a Tartar."

Hampered by the conservative traditions of Moscow, Peter determined to build a new capital on the northern frontier nearest the Baltic Sea, which would symbolize the new Russia. Accordingly thousands of serfs, peasants, and prisoners of war were put to work draining the marsh lands on the banks of the Neva River. In 1703 St. Petersburg was founded as the new capital. It owed its existence to the unremitting toil of the Russian peasant. Over fifty thousand laborers, it is estimated, lost their lives in the building of the city on account of poor equipment and unsanitary conditions.

In the new Russia symbolized by St. Petersburg everyone must work to serve the state. The Patriarchate was abolished, as noted above, and the church became the handmaid of the state. Even the lives of the clergy and monks were investigated; the property of monastic orders was confiscated, and a census was

taken of all the monks who were henceforth to receive a salary from the state. The old nobility lost many of their privileges which they could regain only by performing service as state officials or by engaging in commerce and industry.

These political reforms of Peter were based on no liberal principles of political theory but on the immediate necessity of winning the war against Sweden. The government of the empire was centralized in the hands of a small group of officials appointed by the Tsar and known as the Governing Senate (1711). It was the function of the senate to formulate legislation, to supervise administration of the empire, and to act as a supreme court of justice. In the absence of the Tsar in time of war, the senate also acted as an administrative commission or council of regency.

Another great improvement in administration was the establishment in 1718 of ten colleges (or departments)—war, navy, foreign affairs, commerce, manufactures, mines, revenue, justice, treasury, and property of the nobility—for the more efficient handling of state business. This collegiate system was borrowed directly from German and Swedish practice.

Local government was simplified considerably by a division of the whole empire into eight governments (later twelve) administered by governors responsible to the senate. Each government, moreover, was charged with the support of a regiment of soldiers.

The least satisfactory feature of Peter's reign was his handling of the finances. Both direct and indirect

taxes were increased to pay for his wars. The taxes were not only heavy but poorly distributed, while the capitation tax had the undesirable result of confusing the half-free peasants with serfs, thus lowering the status of the former in their dealings with the nobility.

Peter the Great has been severely condemned for his reforms by some Russian historians, while others have been inordinate in their praise of his work. Conservative writers, whose patriotism was stirred by the ancient traditions of Muscovy, considered his reign a calamity because he broke the continuity of Russian history and polluted the sacred traditions of Holy Russia by his introduction of the "rotten culture of the West." Nor could they reconcile themselves to his harsh reforms tyrannically imposed for the purpose of waging various wars that resulted in a loss of one-fifth of the population. In the opinion of another group of writers Peter was the greatest sovereign in the history of Russia; his revolutionary methods transformed a backward state into a modern power of the first rank.

More recently there is a tendency to minimize the revolutionary character of Peter's work and to point out that he simply confirmed tendencies begun in the reign of his father, his reforms being too superficial and unsystematic to change the fundamental character of the Russian state.

The achievements of Peter the Great must speak for themselves. While his predecessors played with western culture and suggested many changes that might have influenced Peter, his reforms were scarcely less

than revolutionary. He hastened the process of modernization by a century or more. By his importation of western technical science and culture he made certain that Russia would follow the West in her future development.

III

CATHERINE THE GREAT (1762-1796)

THE rank and file of the Russian people heaved a great sigh of relief when Peter the Great died in 1725, and the nation, tired and weary of change, sought rest and comfort for the next thirty-five years in a long-contemplated return to the customs and life of former days. Aware of the intense conservatism and inertia of his people, Peter had sought, during his own lifetime, to guarantee a continuance of his policy of reform, but there was no one to whom he could entrust the sacred task, for his only son had betrayed him by joining the ranks of the anti-reform faction, for which betrayal he paid the supreme penalty in 1718. For thirty-seven years (1725-62) Russia was ruled by three mediocre and dissolute women, Catherine I (1725-27), Anna (1730-40), and Elizabeth (1741-61); and two weak and unbalanced men, Peter II (1727-30), and Peter III (1761-62). It is a period characterized by a trial of strength between Peter's "eaglets" or reformers and the conservative forces of the empire for control of the throne. The common people, who took little interest in these court intrigues, endured apathetically heavy taxation, corruption in office, and inefficiency, just so long as they were not actively molested by the central authority.

Only once during this period of court intrigues did

Russia awaken from her lethargy to pursue the vigorous foreign policy inaugurated by Peter the Great when the Empress Elizabeth joined Austria, France, Sweden, and Saxony in a coalition against Prussia in the Seven Years' War. But the pleasure-loving empress had no understanding of European politics and entered the conflict more out of personal pique at Frederick the Great, who made tactless insinuating references to her scandalous private life, than for reasons of state. Indeed, her knowledge of geography was so meagre that to the end of her life she persisted in locating England in continental Europe somewhere west of Russia. Notwithstanding the ignorance of their sovereign, the incompetence of their generals, and the inadequacy of their military equipment the Russian soldiers fought with a stolid bravery that upset the calculations of the ablest strategists. They successfully invaded East Prussia in 1757, and in the following year checked the victorious progress of Frederick after he had defeated both the French and Austrian armies at Rossbach and Leuthen. The loss of 20,000 men at Zorndorf was a heavy price to pay but it was not nearly as important for Russia as was Frederick's loss of 12,000, for he could ill afford to spare a single soldier. In the year 1759 the Russians completely routed the Prussian army at Künersdorf, and Frederick, who was in imminent danger of being captured, wrote to Berlin, "Count everything lost. I shall not survive the ruin of my country. Farewell for ever." Elizabeth was now in a position to dictate the fate of whole continents, but she was "too mentally lethargic"

and inexperienced to press her advantage, and her death in 1762 saved Prussia from annihilation. Her successor, who admired Frederick inordinately, at once concluded peace without reaping any reward for Russia's effort in the war.

CATHERINE THE GREAT

When the wayward and dissolute Empress Elizabeth designated her nephew, the Duke of Holstein, as heir apparent and selected as his wife, the obscure German Princess Sophie Auguste Friedrike of Anhalt-Herbst, daughter of a petty official and officer in the service of Frederick II of Prussia, she unwittingly prepared the way to the Russian throne for a very remarkable woman. The marriage arranged by the empress proved unhappy, for the Duke of Holstein was a weakling undeveloped in mind and body, while Friedrike, re-christened Catherine by the Orthodox Church, was a proud, ambitious, intellectual woman with considerable self-esteem. She despised her stupid, irritable, and drunken spouse whose accession to the throne made her life unbearable, for Peter III exhibited about as little consideration for the feelings of his wife as he did for the "accursed land of Russia." He never forgot his Holstein connections and always regarded himself as a German and a Lutheran. No opportunity for insulting the Russian clergy, the Russian army, and the people was overlooked by the demented sovereign whose enemies multiplied daily. Catherine played a wiser game. She assumed an attitude of outraged virtue, cultivated friends in the army and among the

clergy, and pronounced herself a lover of all things Russian. At the same time she entered into a conspiracy led by the devoted Orlov brothers, and on July 8, 1762, forced the abdication of Peter III. Although she had no legitimate title to the throne, the army proclaimed her "Empress by the will of the whole people, in defense of the Orthodox Faith, of the Glory of Russia, and of internal order."

Within a week her husband was murdered in a tavern brawl under very suspicious circumstances but Catherine experienced no grief, and later honored the perpetrators of the deed with her love and rewarded them with high office in the service of the state. Unscrupulous, clever, adroit but extremely courageous, this empress was destined to be the ablest woman on the Russian throne, the greatest sovereign in the history of the nation with the single exception of Peter the Great.

Three factors made possible the astonishingly successful career of Catherine II in Russia and in Europe generally—(1) the political situation in Europe, (2) the loyalty of the *dvorianstvo* or gentry of Russia, and (3) last but not least her own personality, character, and ability.

In the first place, the decline of Turkey and Poland, the rise of Prussia and England, and the violent explosion of the French Revolution in the eighteenth century completely upset the old balance of power, offering an opportunity for aggression and acquisition of territory that no Russian sovereign could overlook. In a real sense Catherine inherited and continued the centuries-old foreign policy of Russia. She did not

make her opportunities as did Peter the Great, but she certainly knew how to exploit to the utmost every one which presented itself. That is her title to fame and greatness.

Secondly, she purchased much of her popularity and power at home by sacrificing the peasantry of Russia to the ruthless exploitation of the nobility or gentry, who became the chief protagonists of her régime out of sheer self-interest.

Finally, the remarkable qualities of mind and character of the empress proved to be her greatest asset. Like most sovereigns of her day, she possessed to an eminent degree the qualities of a Renaissance despot so ably described by Machiavelli in his manual for princes, *The Prince*. Like the despots of Italy in the sixteenth century, she preferred to seem religious, humane, generous, merciful, and just rather than to be so, understanding human nature sufficiently well to know that the world would judge her not by what she was but by what she appeared to be as long as success crowned her political career. Morally she was no paragon of virtue, but be it said to her credit that she never surrendered herself to vulgar dissipation for its own sake as did her dissolute predecessors. She had the sense to profit from her amours by making her numerous lovers devoted servants of the state. Witness the careers of Potemkin and the Orlov brothers.

The secret of her success, according to her own admission, was the Renaissance quality of *virtù*, meaning force of character born of buoyant optimism, self-confidence, and self-seeking—the opposite of our word

"virtue." "I am obliged to will terribly hard by profession," wrote Catherine, and it was this great will power, her cleverness in managing men and inspiring them with her own unbounded optimism and courage, that carried her through to victory.

Moreover, not unlike the Tudors of England, she knew how to identify her interests with those of the "people." This ability gave her reign a thoroughly national character so far as that was possible in Russia. An unusual talent for self-advertisement enabled her to satisfy her own vanity and at the same time to raise the prestige of Russia abroad by cultivating the friendship of the most voluble and influential leaders of thought in Europe. Her correspondence with Voltaire, Diderot, D'Alembert, Frederick II, Joseph II, and her close friend Grimm, was witty, vigorous, and intelligent. A virtuoso in managing men, she played on their vanity and furnished them with ready money to chant her praises before all Europe until people ceased to talk about the "barbarians of Russia."

INTERNAL POLICY

Catherine II belonged to the group of enlightened despots like Frederick the Great of Prussia and Joseph II of Austria.¹ These ruling families were brought up on the French philosophy of the eighteenth century, which was in a large measure derived from the political theories of Hobbes and Locke. Being the first edu-

¹ See also G. Bruun, *The Enlightened Despots* (Berkshire Studies in European History; New York, 1929).

cated ruler of Russia, Catherine read widely in Montesquieu, Gibbon, and Blackstone, and wrote history and literature in the rationalist spirit of her particular mentors, Voltaire and Grimm. Boasting about her "Republican soul," she denounced despotism in her theoretical disquisitions but in practice insisted upon it, for, in keeping with the prevailing opinion of contemporaries, she believed that kings were better able to provide for their people than the people themselves. Accordingly, she proceeded to introduce reforms of a liberal nature; enforcing them, however, by arbitrary authority.

Russia was indeed in desperate need of social, political, and economic reform, and offered a very unusual opportunity for experimentation under the guidance of enlightened despotism. Convinced that "perfect legislation" with resultant "good laws" was the foundation stone of efficient government, a cure for all the existing evils, Catherine determined to become the Justinian of Russia by ordering the codification of all the laws. The work had not been done since 1649, and Russian judges and lawyers as well as ordinary citizens found it impossible to ascertain what the law was. To remedy an intolerable situation Catherine issued her famous *Nakaz* or instructions for the guidance of the reformers. The ideas expressed in this volume were borrowed wholesale from Montesquieu's *Esprit des Lois* and Beccaria's *Crimes and Punishments*, but represented a veritable summary or syllabus of the doctrines of the new philosophy with its astonishingly liberal maxims such as the following: "Sover-

eigns are made to serve their people; it is dangerous for a country to be divided into a few large estates; serfdom ought to be rare, and can only be excused by interests of the state; and all citizens ought to be equal before the law." Such opinions were not relished by the governing classes and nobility, hence Catherine allowed her ministers to suppress a goodly portion of her instructions before publication, so long as she had the triumph of masquerading in the guise of an enlightened liberal.

Carried away by her own theories of liberalism and by the fact that her ideas were considered too dangerous for publication by Louis XV of France, Catherine became even more unconventional and surprised her conservative friends with a proposal for summoning a national assembly, known as the "Legislative Commission," to consider the problem of introducing a new law code. Following her instructions, five hundred and sixty-four delegates were elected by government officials, nobility, crown peasants, and alien races in the empire and summoned to Moscow in 1767 to discuss freely the grievances of their constituencies and to suggest possible legal remedies for incorporation into the new code. For a year and a half the commission sat and freely criticised the inefficiency of the government, the inadequate concessions toward self-government, the evils of serfdom, and so on until the gentry, fearing the loss of its position of privilege and power, brought pressure to bear on the empress, who welcomed the occasion of the outbreak of a war with Turkey in 1768 to dismiss the assembly. At the very

outset the nobility had prevented the representation of the private peasants on the legislative commission, and now with its dismissal their triumph was complete, for Catherine's much-advertised liberalism for foreign consumption resulted in nothing, since no reforms were instituted nor was a law code formulated. Yet the experiment was of some value in that the various classes of the people had an opportunity clearly to set forth their grievances and to suggest a program of reform which might be used as a possible criterion for criticism of the government in the future.

The nobility, who prevented the introduction of these reforms, had been gradually increasing their own privileges and limiting their obligations to the state ever since the death of Peter the Great. Anna and Elizabeth recognized them as an exclusive aristocratic class, while Peter III in 1762 freed them from all obligations to the state, but he did not free the peasants from service to the nobility although serfdom was usually condoned on the ground that the nobles served the state.

THE PUGACHEV REBELLION

The failure of Catherine to mitigate the social, political, and economic oppression of the peasantry resulted in an armed uprising. In the course of the sixteenth century the free peasants had been bound to the soil, and in the following two centuries lost almost all their personal rights by being reduced to the status of serfdom. The only difference that existed between their lot and slavery was the theoretical legal restric-

tion depriving the noble of the privilege of inflicting a death penalty on his serfs, although in practice they were often beaten to death for trivial offences without the censure or interference of the government. This rightless condition of the peasants living on private estates was aggravated by the heavy economic burden imposed on them by their masters and the central government in the form of taxes and services reminiscent of the serfdom of western Europe during the feudal period. The poll tax levied on all males from the cradle to the grave represented an enormous burden, for so perfect was this system of economic exploitation devised by the nobility that the peasant could not spare the small sum of one ruble per year. Numbering ninety-four per cent of the total population and paying twenty times as much as the bourgeoisie in the form of taxes, he enjoyed no rights, while the nobility, paying no taxes at all, enjoyed every known privilege.

Having no legal right of appeal for redress of his grievances, the serf could register his discontent either by illegal means in the form of insurrection, which was immediately suppressed by the government with brutal vengeance, or he might escape oppression by fleeing to the frontier region of the steppes. But in the eighteenth century the Russian armies invaded the Ukraine, bringing authority, civilization, landlordism, and oppression, even to these lawless frontier communities. The Cossacks, however, more enterprising than the peasants, rose in open rebellion (1771) under the leadership of the outlaw Pugachev, who announced that he was Peter III returning from abroad to redress the

grievances of his people. Furnishing the necessary leadership for the downtrodden servile population who flocked to his standard, he marched his army of 25,000 rebels up and down the Volga Valley. Landlords were murdered in cold blood and their estates ravaged.

Simultaneously an epidemic broke out in Moscow followed by a local uprising; Catherine nevertheless sent all the forces she could spare against the rebels and checked their advance toward Moscow in 1773. In the spring of the following year Pugachev reappeared with a larger army which seemed so formidable that Catherine recalled her ablest general, Suvorov, from the Turkish front to cope with the rebellion. He crushed his opponents, and sent Pugachev to Moscow for summary execution in 1775.

The Pugachev rebellion exerted a profound influence on Catherine. In the first place, although she recognized the need for reforms, her confidence and faith in the philosophical and theoretical liberalism of the French philosophers was shaken. In the second place the fear of insurrection led to a closer cooperation between the throne and the nobility for the preservation of law and order, and this close alliance, with its baneful results for the common people, was to last until the year 1917.

In 1775 Catherine introduced her most successful reform. In the interest of more efficient government the empire was divided into forty (later fifty) governments or provinces which were in turn divided into districts on the basis of population. The province contained from three to four hundred thousand people and the

district from twenty to thirty thousand. Each province had a collegiate organization consisting of a Government Administrative Board with a governor as chairman empowered to enforce the laws, a Crown Chamber directed by the vice-governor who looked after financial and economic matters, and a triple hierarchy of courts to deal with civil, criminal, and equity cases. A Board of Social Welfare in each province superintended schools, hospitals, jails, and social welfare work. The districts had an organization similar to that of the province and were controlled by the local nobility who were given a liberal measure of self-government.

The great merit of this reform was in the decentralization of government, the separation of administrative, judicial, and financial functions, and above all in the grant of a measure of self-government which was a modest beginning in the development of self-reliance and initiative on the part of the Russian people.

In 1785 a measure of autonomy was granted to the cities. Townsmen were divided arbitrarily into six classes on the basis of wealth, guild-membership, and professional or educational status. A council consisting of one representative from each of the six classes and a mayor serving for three years was the central executive and administrative organ of the city. It elected all municipal officials and also the members of the new council on expiration of their term of office.

The municipal reform was one of the least effective, for it was designed to place all power in the hands of the plutocracy, where wealthy citizens alone could

afford to serve without pay. The town council, moreover, was accountable to the governor of the province in which it was situated, hence its autonomy was confined to narrow limits.

In all the reforms of Catherine II the nobility were given first consideration. By 1785 they attained the summit of their ambition when the empress issued the famous "Letter of Graces" which has since been called the Magna Charta of the Russian noblesse. It specifically enumerated and guaranteed all the privileges acquired in the course of the preceding centuries: the exclusive right to own landed estates with serfs attached to them; exemption from almost every kind of tax, corporal punishment, confiscation of estates, and from degradation from their noble rank. Freed from every obligation to the state, the Russian noblesse rightly regarded the reign of Catherine II as its golden age.

The status of the peasants however was not improved. Indeed, it was actually worse than it had been under her predecessors, for Catherine extended serfdom to the Ukraine and reduced over one million crown serfs to the less favorable status of private serfs by the grant of crown lands to her numerous lovers and favorites. Her intentions were good but they needed to be carried out. In 1782 she wrote to Grimm, "For all that, I only want the time to finish: it is like my laws, my regulations: everything is begun, nothing finished. If I live ten years longer all will be finished to perfection." She lived ten years and more but nothing was done in the interest of the peasants, for she often

lacked stability and dared not oppose the nobility who had placed her in power. Furthermore, her brilliant foreign policy absorbed much of her attention, until finally when she witnessed the conflagration of the French Revolution, which so impressed itself on her mind, she renounced her "Republican soul" and liberalism forever. Again writing to Grimm (1790) she declared, "The National Assembly should burn all the best French authors, and all that has carried their language over Europe, for all that declares against the abominable mess that they have made. . . . As for the people and its opinion, that is of no great consequence."

Four years later she inveighed against the French Revolution in extravagant language, calling it an "irreligious, immoral, anarchical, abominable, and diabolical plague, the enemy of God and of Thrones." She realized that it was responsible for the beginning of a new era in the history of the Russian people. Before the year 1789 the enlightened despots had imposed reforms; after it the Russian people began to assert themselves in opposition to the government which abhorred all liberalism. Closing the Russian frontier against the contaminating influence of the French Jacobins, Catherine inaugurated a policy of repression to crush the liberal movement at home. The great social worker and philanthropist Novikov, and his peer, Alexander Radishchev, the author of *A Journey to St. Petersburg and Moscow* which denounced serfdom, were thrown into jail and then exiled only to become the first martyrs of liberalism in autocratic Russia.

FOREIGN POLICY

Catherine's title to greatness primarily rests on the consummate skill and unscrupulous manner in which she carried the policies of Peter the Great to a successful climax through her extraordinary talent in appraising a given political situation and extracting from it every possible advantage. Living in an age of dynastic combinations, balances of power, colonial and commercial expansion, enlightened despotism, and wars that repeatedly upset the stability of European polity, she did not need to create her opportunities. She exploited them.

It was the spirit of the age to sanction ruthless aggression and the partition of empires without the slightest regard for moral decency or justice. England and France waged war over the inheritance of the Spanish Empire. England, Austria, and Holland engaged in a bitter struggle (1740-48) with Prussia and France in the name of the balance of power, the Pragmatic Sanction, and more fundamentally for the partition of the Austrian Empire. In 1756 England and France with their allies began a struggle for commercial and colonial supremacy, while Prussia and Austria fought over Silesia and military supremacy on the continent.

Catherine had ascended the Russian throne before the epoch-making Seven Years' War was ended, prepared to play a leading rôle on the stage of Europe for personal glory and the prestige of Russia. The political situation was exceedingly favorable, for the great powers were all involved in or had just emerged from

the conflict in a more or less exhausted state. They were in no position to interfere with her plan to destroy the barrier of Sweden, Poland, and Turkey, which had isolated Russia from western Europe and had cut her off from access to the Baltic and Black Seas for centuries. Even more propitious was the fact that these three states had entered upon a period of anarchy and decline that offered an extraordinary opportunity for Russian intervention and intrigue.

THE POLISH QUESTION

The Republic of Poland was particularly vulnerable on account of two centuries of economic stagnation, political chaos, and social decline. In the sixteenth century the economic progress of Polish cities was impaired by a radical change in overland trade routes through Poland resulting from the discovery by the Portuguese of a new route to India round the Cape of Good Hope. Commercial supremacy now passed from the Mediterranean ports of Italy, Syria, and Egypt to the Atlantic ports of Lisbon and Antwerp, which became the chief distributors of eastern goods to western Europe. Even more serious for Poland was the seizure of the mouths of the Dnieper and Dniester Rivers by the Turk in the fifteenth century and the expulsion of the Genoese from Kaffa in the Crimea in 1475, for the country now lost its chief outlets to the Black and Mediterranean Seas. An added source of weakness that led to the decline of cities was the ignorant and selfish discriminatory legislation of the nobility, who

attempted to regulate trade and profits by law. Finally, the prosperity of the whole country was seriously imperilled by the Black Death (1652-55 and 1708-11) and the disastrous wars of the period extended from 1648 to 1716. The invasion of Poland by the Swedes, Cossacks, and Russians in the second half of the seventeenth century nearly overwhelmed the nation. It emerged from the deluge in a worse condition than Germany after the Thirty Years' War. For more than half a century Poland waged war against her enemies, and while she survived the struggle, she suffered the loss of more than one-third of her population, and economically was worse off in the eighteenth century than she had been in the thirteenth.

Political decline followed economic stagnation, although in the later Middle Ages Poland had surpassed the states of continental Europe in the organization of a constitution and the consolidation of political unity. In the words of the historian, Szujski, "The work of Ladislav Lokietek (1320-33) and of Casimir the Great (1333-70) was a century and a half in advance of the organizing activities of Louis XI in France, of Ferdinand and Isabella in Spain, of Henry VII in England; and it anticipated by two centuries the efforts of Maximilian II in the same direction." Having achieved unity under the Piast dynasty, Poland entered upon an era of great brilliance and prosperity under the Jagellon dynasty (1386-1572) as the greatest power of central and eastern Europe. At the same time the nation developed a remarkable constitution comparable only to that of England, for it guaranteed

limited monarchy, local autonomy, individual liberty, and religious toleration in an age dominated by absolute monarchy and military despotism. During the Reformation when religious wars threatened to engulf all Europe, Poland alone eschewed religious strife by offering religious toleration to all sects.

Local liberties were guaranteed and local government was administered by about fifty dietines (*sejmiki*) for as many autonomous districts which in turn sent deputies to a central Diet (*sejm*) representing the interests of the country as a whole. The system provided for extreme decentralization of the government owing to the fact that the dietines (1370) which arose nearly a century earlier than the central Diet (1493) retained control of the purse and refused to surrender important powers needed for the proper functioning of the larger body, which in consequence never became as powerful as the parliament of England. National interests, therefore, were often sacrificed on account of local prejudice, and kings were often constrained to appear before each dietine when in need of revenue for the administration of the state. Royal authority was further limited by numerous charters drawn up by the nobility in the manner of Magna Charta in England. In the sixteenth century the political theorist Modrzewski anticipated John Locke when he wrote that "It concerns kings to know that they are set up for the people, and not the people for them. The authority that they wield over the nation is given them, not for themselves, but for it."

The year 1572 marks a turning point in the history

of Polish constitutionalism. The Jagellon dynasty, which was as popular in Poland as the Tudors were in England, died out, and the nobility, who regarded themselves as the sovereign *demos* of the Republic, elected a foreign prince as king. The practice of choosing sovereigns outside a given dynasty led to electioneering of the worst sort, bribery, general corruption of the nation, civil strife, and foreign intervention. The monarchs themselves had but a temporary interest in their kingdom and exploited it accordingly. The two Saxon kings, Augustus II and Augustus III, for example, proved to be monsters of moral obliquity who not only degraded the nation but planned its partition in the interest of their families and friends. Such treasonable activities resulted in further limitation of royal prerogatives by the nobility who rose to a position of omnipotence in the state.

Perhaps the greatest misfortune of Poland in modern times was the corruption of the most politically active element in the state, the nobility, which had become demoralized, selfish, provincial, and ignorant to an astonishing degree. In the name of individual freedom and "golden liberty" this class appropriated the prerogatives of royalty and at the same time excluded the townsmen and peasants from all participation in the government. They increased the power of the local dietines representing their own interests and paralyzed the central Diet by issuing mandates to the national deputies who dared not exceed their instructions even when the general welfare of the state required the sacrifice of a measure of local autonomy.

In 1652 they inaugurated the pernicious practice of exploding the Diet by insisting on a narrow interpretation of the doctrine known as the *liberum veto* which provided for unanimous consent in the passage of every measure brought before the assembly. Henceforth the veto of a single deputy could override the will of the majority in any measure before the Diet. Still later the veto of a deputy was interpreted to mean necessary dissolution of the assembly at once, and finally it was held to annul all previous decisions made during a particular session. In this manner the government was placed at the mercy of a single corrupt deputy who could throw the whole machinery of government out of order and produce anarchy. During the thirty years of Augustus III's reign (1733-63) not one Diet escaped the fate of being exploded. The only means of getting around the *liberum veto* was the formation of a Confederation, but it proved worse than the veto itself. It was an armed association of private citizens organized for the purpose of securing legislation against the opposition of a minority. If the rest of the nation rallied to the support of a Confederation, measures could be passed by majority vote, but failure of the country to respond often resulted in civil war. This technical device eventually contributed to the downfall of the Republic, for the confederates did not hesitate to appeal to foreign powers for assistance in putting through their program.

Another astounding theory held by the nobility was the belief that if Poland limited her armament and renounced aggressive warfare, her neighbors would not

attack her. Pacifism was preached and practised to such an extent that the defenseless Republic was invaded and annihilated by the three military powers—Russia, Prussia, and Austria. Apparently these advanced theories were not appreciated in an age distinguished for its enlightened despotism and military conquests.

When Catherine the Great ascended the Russian throne an influential group of reformers headed by the Czartoryski family was actively engaged in an attempt to regenerate Poland by revising its defective constitution and by securing the election of a native dynasty, preferably their own, to the Polish throne; but the Family, as it was called, lacked sufficient support in the country to inaugurate these reforms and made the mistake of seeking the friendly assistance of Catherine of Russia, the mistress of one of their relatives.

Catherine welcomed the advances of the Czartoryski party and gave to Poland her direct and vigorous attention. Her first act was to exclude Prince Karl, son of Augustus III (1733-63), from the succession in Kurland, a dependency of Poland, by placing her own candidate, Biren, on the throne in April, 1763. A few months later the King of Poland died, and the following March Russia intervened by sending 8,000 soldiers to the aid of the Czartoryski family which was then organizing a Confederation. At the same time Catherine concluded a treaty with Frederick II of Prussia providing for joint intervention to secure the

election of their candidate, Stanislas Poniatowski, to the Polish throne.

Poniatowski was a handsome young man, highly cultured and charming, but lacking in courage and force of character. As one of her discarded lovers Catherine knew him well, and she maintained him on the Polish throne for twenty years with the support of Russian bayonets and financial subsidies. The actual ruler of Poland, however, was the Russian ambassador Repnin, who sought to legalize Russian influence in the country by organizing a pro-Russian party, for his mistress preferred to rule the country through legal forms of the old Polish constitution rather than by force. Accordingly, the empress then deserted the Czartoryski reformers who desired to revise the old constitution, and raised the issue of toleration and political equality for dissidents or non-Catholic citizens of Poland. Under the guise of religious liberty and toleration she preserved and guaranteed anarchy. Thus reformers were intimidated, arrested and deported while Repnin fathered two Confederations or armed associations of private citizens for the purpose of defending the old constitution against the majority of the Diet.

The Diet of October 1767 was forced to assemble under the shadow of Russian bayonets and to accede to Catherine's demands for political equality of the dissidents who formed the nucleus of a pro-Russian party in Poland. In February 1768 it was compelled to ratify a treaty with Russia whereby Catherine guaranteed the old constitution and the territorial integ-

rity of Poland. Thus the Republic became a sphere of influence of Russia, and the king was reduced to the position of a puppet ruler, for no new law could be passed without the consent of the enfranchised dissidents who effectively nullified all legislation by the exercise of the privilege of *liberum veto*.

Poland was bound hand and foot, but the empress now made the mistake of moving too fast in her policy of aggression, and outraged the sense of honor of the Polish patriots, who organized the Confederation of Bar (1768) near the Turkish frontier. Winning the support of Austria, they pledged themselves to restore the Roman Catholic faith and influence by opposing the dissident party favored by Russia. Civil war followed, and Russian, Prussian, and Austrian troops entered Poland to watch the contest and to furnish assistance to one party or another.

The Polish question was rapidly becoming an international problem, for it brought two systems of alliances face to face, the "Northern System" or projected alliance between Russia, Prussia, Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and England against France and Austria. The French foreign minister, Choiseul, opposed Russian influence in Sweden and assisted the Confederates of Bar with arms and ammunition smuggled across the Turkish frontier. He also induced the sultan to declare war on Russia, for the Polish question had been regarded as an essential part of the "Eastern Question" ever since the reign of Peter the Great.

THE NEAR-EASTERN QUESTION

In a larger sense the Near-eastern Question may be defined as a conflict of three thousand years' standing between two civilizations, occidental and oriental, at their point of contact in southeastern Europe and Asia Minor. In a more narrow sense it is a contest between European rivals and Turkey for control of the Balkan peninsula and the trade routes of southeastern Europe. The battle of Kossovo (1389) represents the supreme effort of the small states of the Balkans to check the victorious advance of the Mohammedan Turk. When the armies of the Ottoman Empire reached the Carpathians and then advanced to the Adriatic Sea the great powers of Europe became vitally interested likewise, and proceeded to form numerous Christian leagues throughout the following centuries for the defense of the cross against the crescent and the expulsion of the Turk from Europe. The memorable battles of Nicopolis (1396), Varna (1444), Mohacs (1526), Vienna (1529), Lepanto (1571), and the many sieges of the strategic fortress at Belgrade are some of the more striking events of that long struggle between the East and West. In the second half of the sixteenth century the principal states in the league against Turkey were Austria, Poland, Spain, and Venice. They definitely checked the Ottoman offensive, and in 1683 John Sobieski, King of Poland, decisively crushed the Turkish forces at the siege of Vienna, which proved to be the last great effort made by the Turks in their attempt to penetrate into cen-

tral Europe. Prince Eugene of Austria followed up the advantage gained at Vienna and imposed the shameful treaty of Carlowitz (1699) upon the enemy. In the following century Russia supplanted Poland as the principal ally of Austria in the conflict with the Ottoman sultan. While Peter the Great maneuvered his armies in the region of the Pruth River, Prince Eugene gained victories which resulted in the cession to Austria of the Banat of Temesvar, a large part of Serbia and Wallachia, and the city of Belgrade in the Treaty of Passarowitz (1718). But the death of Prince Eugene in the year 1736 deprived Austria of her ablest commander just as the sultan had reorganized his armies and had resumed the offensive, which compelled Austria to surrender most of her gains by the Treaty of Belgrade (1739). Weakened by the War of the Austrian Succession (1740-48) and the spectacular rise of Prussia, Austria withdrew from the struggle with Turkey until the accession of Joseph II (1765) who resumed the war in alliance with Catherine the Great. The sultan, advised by the French and English ambassadors, was astute enough to perceive that the policy of aggressive expansion sponsored by the allies menaced the integrity of both Poland and Turkey. He was right in thinking that a partition of Poland would be a prelude to the dismemberment of Turkey. Accordingly, in the year 1762 he promised assistance for Poland and six years later declared war on Russia when some Cossack detachments crossed the Ottoman frontier at Balta in hot pursuit of the Polish confederates. Catherine accepted the challenge with

more than her usual optimism, for a war with Turkey promised great conquests and glory and raised national aspirations for expansion southward toward Constantinople, the "traditional cradle of Russian civilization and Orthodoxy," that had been dishonored for so many centuries by the unspeakable Turk. Such a war might stir the deepest patriotism of the nation and bring to mind that earlier struggle for the liberation of Russia from Mongol oppression three centuries ago.

There was great enthusiasm on both sides. Neither Russia nor Turkey was prepared for war, but Catherine believed in her destiny and her greatest expectations were to be fulfilled. Suvorov, the ablest general that Russia had ever produced, fought a brilliant campaign along the Danube River, while Alexis Orlov sailed forth with the decrepit Baltic fleet around Europe to the Mediterranean, where he won a signal victory over the enemy at Chesme Bay (1770).

But the brilliant success of Catherine's generals alarmed the other sovereigns of Europe who protested that the balance of power would be upset if Russia gained a strangle hold on both Poland and Turkey. Frederick II politely congratulated Catherine on the success of her armies, but expressed at the same time no little anxiety over the general political situation which might drag Prussia into another struggle before she had recuperated from the harrowing experiences of the Seven Years' War. Nor was he at all pleased with the prospect of Russian predominance in Poland, which

might preclude him from securing a coveted share of that country on the basis of a partition.

Austria also protested against Russian influence in Poland and was so deeply stirred by the apparent collapse of Turkey that she threatened war if Russia should annex Turkish territory without providing for a corresponding acquisition for Austria. Joseph II, co-regent of Austria, drew closer to the sultan, offering to cooperate against Russia, and in January, 1769, even conferred with his enemy Frederick II, who announced his opposition to Russian gains in Turkey. Thus Austria, Prussia, and Russia reached a diplomatic impasse that threatened to break forth into a general European war over the Turkish question.

How then was Russia to secure adequate compensation for her brilliant success without upsetting the balance of power? Frederick II offered an astonishing solution by proposing the partition of Poland. Catherine assumed an air of virtuous indignation at the suggestion and allowed the public to think her acceptance of it a diplomatic defeat. In reality, however, she had played with the thought of partition for years and was glad to have Prussia bear the odium of the deed while she herself received the privilege of determining the respective shares each partitioning power was to receive. Maria Theresa was more sincere in expressing her indignation, for she wept copious tears while insisting that her share must be very large since Austria could not "lose her reputation for so small a gain."

The three powers sealed their shameful bargain by

the Treaty of Partition, August 5, 1772. Austria received fifteen hundred square miles with a population of two million six hundred thousand in the vicinity of Galicia: Russia took seventeen hundred square miles and a population of one million six hundred thousand at Polotsk, Vitebsk, and Minsk; Prussia's share amounted to seventeen thousand square miles with a population of six hundred thousand in Posen and Polish Pomerania. The remainder of Poland continued to be a sphere of influence of Russia, which compelled the Diet to ratify the divisions.

After she had partitioned Poland and had appeased the wrath of Austria and Prussia, Catherine resumed the war with Turkey. Again the Russian armies defeated the Turks at Varna, Shumla, and Kuchuk Kainardji, forcing the sultan to sue for peace (1774). The Treaty of Kuchuck Kainardji gave to Russia the district of Kabarda north of the Caucasus Mountains, and the strategically important forts of Azov, Kerch, Yeni-Kale, and Kinburn, effectively enveloping the Crimea, which was declared independent. In Moldavia and Wallachia the Christian religion was to be tolerated while the Russian ministers at Constantinople secured the privilege of remonstrating in behalf of the Christians in these Danubian principalities. Moreover "The Sublime Porte promises to protect constantly the Christian religion and churches and allows the ministers of Russia to Constantinople to make representations in their behalf." This clause was interpreted by Russia to mean a Russian protectorate over all Christians in the Ottoman Empire and

was one of the greatest triumphs of Russian diplomacy, for the Greek Orthodox Christians who constituted over one-half the population of Turkey henceforth regarded Russia as their protector and champion. By adopting the same tactics which she employed in Poland Catherine paved the way for Russian interference in the internal affairs of Turkey on the pretext of defending the principle of religious toleration.

The interval of fourteen years (1774-1787) between the first and second Turkish wars was marked by a growing alienation between Russia and Prussia and a corresponding rapprochement between Russia and Austria, but Catherine made the transition gradually, at the same time managing to retain the good will of Frederick II by deciding the Austro-Prussian quarrel over Bavaria in his favor (1779). The Northern System having proved more of a hindrance than a help in Catherine's ambitious plans to expel the Turk from Europe, she invited Joseph II to St. Petersburg to discuss a project for a joint attack upon and partition of Turkey. The Austrian Emperor was eager to eclipse the fame of his rival Frederick, while Catherine dreamed of a grandiose plan for restoring the Greek Empire under the rule of an Orthodox prince. Joseph had already seized the Bukovina in 1775 from Turkey in compensation for his services in checking the appetite of Russia the previous year, while Catherine fixed her gaze on the Crimea and on Constantinople itself. Despite the new treaty of amity with Turkey, concluded in 1779, Catherine christened her second

grandson with the name Constantine, and celebrated the event by striking medals in his honor bearing the design of the church of St. Sophia at Constantinople. Four years later (1783) she announced the annexation of the Crimea and added insult to injury by staging a triumphal progress, directed by Potemkin, to the Crimea. All the foreign ambassadors in Russia received an invitation to accompany Her Majesty to the Black Sea where Potemkin had established a naval base, and the empress freely revealed her purpose of creating a new empire in the territory of Turkey.

The sultan prepared for war and in July 1787 issued an ultimatum demanding the restoration of the Crimea; the withdrawal of Russian protection from Georgia; and a revision of the Treaty of Kuchuk Kainardji. Catherine accepted the challenge with alacrity, inviting Austria to enter the war. Both sovereigns expected to secure immense territorial gains after a short and decisive campaign, but they were soon disillusioned. The Turkish forces displayed unexpected resistance while the European powers threatened intervention. England and Prussia urged Gustavus III of Sweden to attack Russia in the north, Frederick II mobilized his armies along the Austrian frontier, and England took over the old French policy of encouraging and supporting the sultan at Constantinople.

The Russian campaign progressed successfully under the command of Suvorov and Rumyantsev, but the Austrian generalship was bad. Joseph II captured Belgrade and Passarowitz despite his poor leadership,

but could advance no farther on account of a rebellion in the Netherlands and in Hungary which threatened the existence of the Empire. He died the following February (1790) in the midst of the war. His successor, Leopold, signed with Turkey the Peace of Sistova (1791) on the basis of the *status quo ante bellum* to save the Empire from internal disruption and war with Prussia and France. Russia continued the war alone although the campaign proved so costly that in January 1792 the Peace of Jassy was concluded. By the terms of that treaty Russia retained Ochakov and the littoral between the Bug and the Dniester Rivers, while the sultan renounced his claim to interference in the Crimea.

THE SECOND PARTITION OF POLAND

In 1772 Poland had been effectively crushed and was ruled by the Russian ambassador, who strengthened his position by further limiting the power of the king and by guaranteeing the worst features of the old constitution. But the excessive brutality and oppression of Russian rule awakened the spirit of the nation, and it made a heroic effort to survive by inaugurating a veritable political, economic, and intellectual renaissance during the interval of eighteen years between the first and second partitions. An "Educational Commission" directed by the able reformer, Konarski, and supported by funds received from the Jesuit order (which was suppressed in 1773) completely reorganized and modernized the entire edu-

cational system of the country and prepared a younger generation of patriots for the great task of regenerating the nation. The reform party demanded a revision of the constitution; abolition of the *liberum veto*; civil equality of townsmen; hereditary monarchy; and amelioration of the condition of the peasantry. Poland was seething with new life but dared not challenge Russia until 1788, when the empress became involved in her second war with Turkey.

The reformers called the famous Four Years' Diet on October 16, 1788, to consider the state of the nation. They gained a majority in the assembly, whose first act was to repudiate the Russian guarantee of the old constitution in 1775 and to reject Catherine's proffered alliance for a joint war against Turkey. The King of Prussia welcomed the anti-Russian movement in Poland, as he was alarmed by the success of the Russian armies in Turkey, and embarrassed Catherine still more by encouraging the reformers to demand the withdrawal of Russian troops from the territory of the Republic. As a token of his sincerity, Frederick William voluntarily withdrew Prussia's guarantee of the old constitution and announced emphatically that in his estimation the Polish Diet had the right to frame a new constitution. In 1790 he concluded an offensive-defensive alliance with Poland against Russia and Austria.

This alliance with Prussia eliminated all fear of Russia and furnished the reformers with the necessary influence and courage to effect the revolution of May 3, 1791. On that memorable day a new consti-

tution was promulgated, abolishing the old order and providing for a hereditary constitutional monarchy, responsible ministers, majority rule, and moderate social and political reforms affecting the bourgeoisie and peasants. It was an admirable document adopted by the nation without civil war or bloodshed, a striking contrast to the bloody scenes and turbulence that accompanied a similar revolution in France.

Involved in her war with Turkey and Sweden and exasperated by the treachery of Prussia, Catherine watched the humiliating events in Poland with furious impotence. But in the very darkest moment of her humiliation the wheel of fortune turned. The sudden withdrawal of the Emperor Leopold II (February, 1790) from the Turkish war and his rapprochement with Prussia five months later through the mediation of England reduced the value of the Polish-Prussian alliance for Frederick William II, while in the same year Sweden signed the Treaty of Verela with Russia. All danger of foreign intervention was prevented also by the astonishing progress of the French Revolution which absorbed the attention of the great powers. Indeed, Catherine confessed to her secretary in December 1791 that she was "racking her brains to push the courts of Vienna and Berlin into the French enterprise, so that she might have her elbows free" to deal with the Polish question, and just at the moment when she most needed to have them occupied in the West, France declared war on Austria and Prussia (1792). With a touch of irony the empress could

now inform her allies that Russia would do her part in preserving the tranquillity of Europe by suppressing Jacobinism in Poland while they were occupied in the West. History seemed to repeat itself, for the fate of Poland was now as closely bound up with the fortunes of France as it had been with Turkey in 1768. The allies failed to cooperate effectively against the Revolution because of the Polish question and as a result were defeated in 1792. In that year Poland saved France from overwhelming defeat just as she had saved Turkey from disaster in the First Partition agreement. Failing to receive compensation in France the predatory powers recouped their losses by staking out claims in Poland.

Before this news of the declaration of war by France had reached Russia, Catherine had concluded peace with Turkey (1792) and was directing all her attention toward Poland. The three conspirators, Felix Potocki, Sewerin Rzewuski, and Xavier Branicki, were invited to St. Petersburg to sign a secret convention in which the empress solemnly promised to restore the old anarchical constitution by force of arms. Assured of Russian support, the conspirators formed the infamous Confederation of Targowica on May 14, 1792, and simultaneously the Russian envoy at Warsaw presented a formal declaration of war.

The newly organized Polish army was at once mobilized, and the Diet sent an envoy to Berlin to obtain the assistance of Prussia stipulated in the treaty of March 1791. But Frederick William II, who in the

meantime had reached a secret understanding with Catherine, repudiated his obligations and deserted the Poles in their hour of greatest need. A Polish army of 46,000 led by Joseph Poniatowski and Thaddeus Kosciuszko managed to check the advance of the Russian army of 100,000 men for three months, but the final issue was never in doubt. In July 1792 the King of Poland submitted to Catherine, while the Russian and Prussian armies poured into the country to stake out the respective claims of their sovereigns and to restore the old constitution.

A treaty of partition was signed the following January between Russia and Prussia whereby the former received four thousand five hundred square miles of territory in Lithuania, White Russia, Volhynia, and Podolia. The latter took possession of eleven hundred square miles in Great Poland with the cities of Thorn (Torun) and Danzig (Gdansk). The Russian ambassador summoned a Diet to Grodno in June and forced it to ratify these acts of brigandage and restore the old constitution with its *liberum veto*.

THE THIRD PARTITION OF POLAND

The third partition of Poland in 1795, following the insurrection led by Kosciuszko the previous year, was a logical sequel to the second. Catherine was again the master mind. She determined the acquisitions and escaped the odium of the deed by sharing responsibility for the crime with Prussia and Austria. All the territory between the Niemen and the Vistula Rivers together with the city of Warsaw fell to Prussia. Rus-

sia received Courland and the rest of Lithuania, while Austria took Sandomir, Lublin, and Cracow.

At the completion of her masterpiece of diplomacy in the partitions of Poland, Catherine died November 17, 1796. She had made many promises to strike a decisive blow at revolutionary France, but there is every reason to believe, despite her sincere abhorrence of Jacobinism, that she never intended to send her armies against the Revolution. It was her mission to suppress non-existent Jacobinism in Sweden, Poland, and Turkey, for it was a more profitable and practicable enterprise, and posterity has put its stamp of approval on her brilliant record by granting her the title of Catherine the Great.

A glance backward over the long road traveled by the Russian people since their early beginnings at Kiev and Moscow to the end of the eighteenth century when Russia became the largest state in the world reveals a story of great territorial expansion and national development under the leadership of despotic princes and tsars. The brilliant career of Catherine the Great dramatically closes the period of Russian territorial expansion in Europe by the Partitions of Poland, and opens a new era that has the French Revolution as its starting point with its emphasis on the history of the people rather than of the state. The Russian people no longer needed the prodding of despotic sovereigns like Peter the Great and Catherine, for they had developed an initiative of their own in bringing about the social, intellectual, and economic transformation of the nation. The modern era was at hand.

PRONOUNCING GLOSSARY

druzhina	drūzhē'na
dvoriani	dvōryānē'
dvorianstvo	dvōryā'nstvō
oprichnina	ōprī'chnēna
pomiestie	pōmyē'styē
Premysl	pshē'mīshl
sejm	sēym
sejmiki	sēymē'kē
starosta	stārō'stā
veche	vyētchē
wiece	vyětsē
votchina	vō'tchīna

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